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VANCOUVER metro®
Thursday, December 20, 2012
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TERROR ON THE ROAD

RCMP cruisers block traffic from entering the Coquitlam side of the Port Mann Bridge on Wednesday afternoon. The bridge was closed after falling chunks of ice and "snow bombs" fell from the overhead wires, damaging at least five cars and injuring two people. Turn to page 4 to read one driver's account of the frightening ordeal. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Apocalypse now and then

Yet another end-of-days prediction. Who's profiting from the doomsday boom? PAGES 22 & 23

Django not easy to watch

Even Quentin Tarantino was brought to tears by some scenes in his film that show slaves being brutalized PAGE 33

Love for Adele still strong

The singer didn't release a new album this year, but is still named Entertainer of the Year by The Associated Press PAGE 38

Adrian Dix's very good year

The NDP Opposition leader talks about his party's momentum and the issues that matter to him for 2013 PAGE 8

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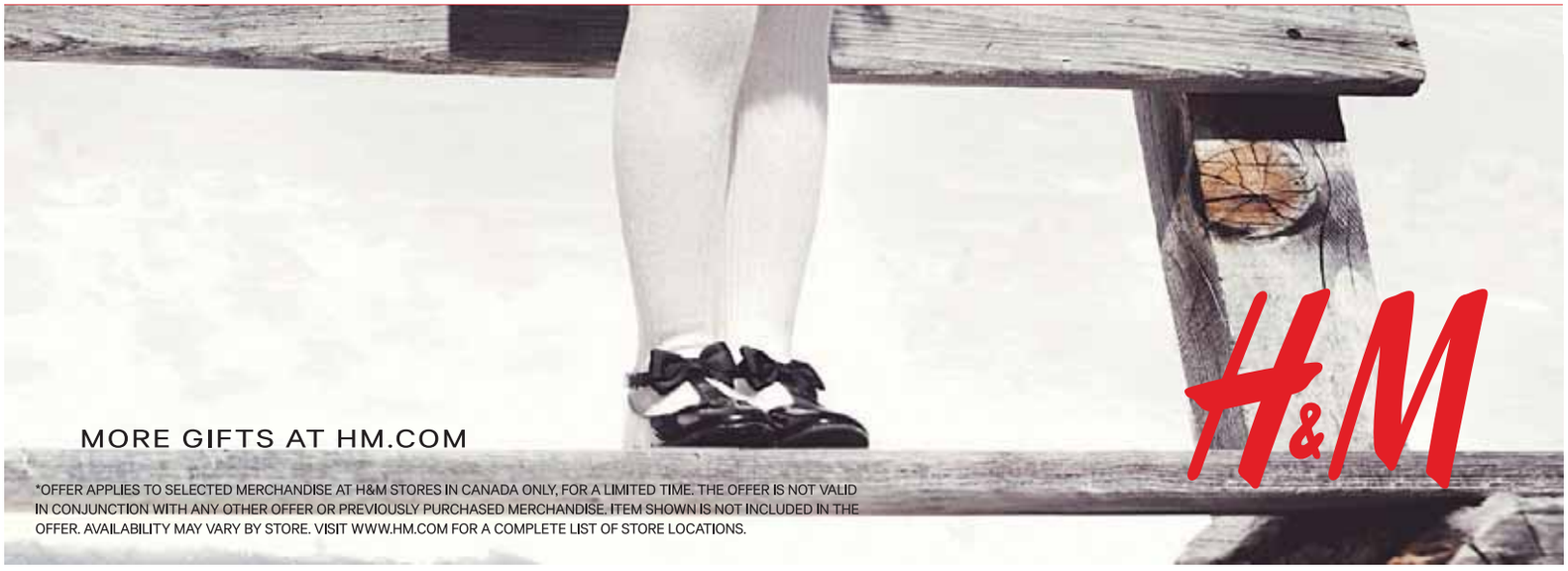

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Favourite stories of 2012

Mario Gutierrez's magical ride

When 25-year-old Mario Gutierrez rode I'll Have Another to win the 138th Kentucky Derby in early May, he went from being relatively unknown to a rock star of the horse-racing world.

The Mexican-born jockey captured the hearts of horse-racing fans with his humility, sense of humour and shy smile. (Winning the Kentucky and Preakness Stakes didn't hurt either.)

He always credited I'll Have Another for the victories and thanked his mentor Glen Todd for seeing his potential.

Gutierrez's success also brought the buzz back to Vancouver's Hastings Racecourse and boosted local talent.

Despite being denied a chance at the elusive Triple Crown when his horse was pulled from the Belmont Stakes due to tendonitis, his concern for the horse overshadowed any feelings of disappointment.

During my interview with him when he was back in town for the B.C. Derby in September, I saw firsthand why everybody loves the guy.

He spoke of his love for his family and girlfriend, his father-son relationship with Todd, and his goal of establishing himself as one of the top riders in southern California to prove that his wins weren't just flukes.

It was also fun to know that we both shamelessly enjoy watching CSI and Criminal Minds.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

On the web

Have your say: Vote for the top stories of 2012 at metronews.ca. Readers' picks will be published on Friday.

The winter shelter at Seymour and Davie will provide a warm place to sleep for 40 Vancouverites without homes. Currently, there's no room left at the city's four winter shelters. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Vancouver's winter shelters now full

Respite. The city's four winter shelters house 160 people who would otherwise be on the streets until end of May

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

There's no room left at Vancouver's four winter shelters, but more than 250 temporary beds have been made available at churches and community organizations due to extreme weather.

"This is the type of weather where people die in the streets," RainCity Housing associate director Sean Spear said Wednesday, when Vancouver experienced one of its heaviest snowfalls since 2008.

Under B.C.'s Assistance to Shelter Act, nine additional shelters were opened across the city Tuesday and Wednesday night.

Even though the four winter shelters' 160 beds were at capacity within two days of opening earlier in December, Spear said they wouldn't turn anyone away in such frigid weather until they can find them safe transport to an alternative bed.

"Imagine sleeping outside on a night like this," Spear said at the 40-bed shelter at Seymour and Davie. "When we open these and they all fill up within a day or two, it shows us there's a critical need for this."

But not all Yaletown residents saw the need for a shelter in that location.

There is already a high concentration of social services in the area and there was no consultation as to the shelter's location, said Sharon Promislow of the Seymour/Richards Community Association.

"Definitely I concede — and happily so — that the influence on the block is less than the worst fear," Promislow said Wednesday. Nor does her group want to put people out in the snow — far from it, she said. Rather, she wants the city to create a committee to determine the best location for shelters next year.

The province spends $1.6 million to operate the four shelters, while the city will spend up to $500,000 on leasing and upgrading the spaces. They will house 160 people who otherwise would be on the streets until the end of May.

‘I have never felt so trapped in my life’: Driver

Port Mann Bridge. Winter weather wreaks havoc on motorists travelling brand-new route

Exclusively online

For a photo gallery of the Port Mann Bridge closure, go to metronews.ca

CARA MCKENNA
vancouver@metronews.ca

David Pensato was halfway across the Port Mann Bridge Wednesday afternoon when his car windshield was shattered by a huge chunk of falling ice.

The brand-new $3.3-billion bridge was closed in both directions for hours Wednesday after chunks of ice and “snow bombs” fell from the overhead wires, damaging vehicles and injuring two people.

At around 2:40 p.m., RCMP said around five vehicles had reported being struck by chunks of falling ice.

“We were probably on the bridge at about 12:45, and it shut down at about (1 p.m.),” said Pensato, who was driving on the bridge with his mother, wife and children when his car windshield shattered.

“Then we sort of saw the snow falling, and it actually sort of looked funny at first. They looked like large bird droppings, really. It hit the van in front of us and the whole van shook and it was like, ‘Oh God. Not really funny anymore.’ We kept edging forward and hoping we wouldn’t get hit, and then we did. It literally was right in front of my face.”

Pensato said he was trapped on the bridge for another half-hour after his windshield shattered and had to inch forward hoping his car wouldn’t get hit again.

“I have never felt so trapped in my life,” Pensato tweeted afterwards.

He and his family stayed in Surrey until they could find a ride.

“As we were getting off the bridge, there was an RCMP officer on the side of the road,” said Pensato.

“They were literally handing out cards with the ICBC claims number on it.”

ICBC was inundated with claims from approximately 60 Port Mann bridge drivers.

On Twitter, pro-golfer James Lepp tweeted a photo of a damaged driver-side mirror along with the message, “So about that new Port Mann bridge? Well, the overhanging support wires create snow bombs. One just hit my mirror.”

Quoted

“Then we sort of saw the snow falling, and it actually sort of looked funny at first. They looked like large bird droppings, really.”

David Pensato on the “snow bombs” falling from the overhead wires at Port Mann Bridge

The Port Mann Bridge is empty of traffic yesterday afternoon after the bridge was closed because of ice falling from the overhead wires. The ice damaged cars and injured two people. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Harry Bains, MLA for Surrey-Newton and NDP transportation critic, said the Ministry of Transportation has some explaining to do.

“After two weeks of opening we have it closed because of safety reasons. It’s shocking in my view and troubling,” said Bains.

“I think it raises some very, very serious questions about the design. My information is that there are bridges in Sweden, Boston and Britain, and they’ve had some similar issues there. So if they knew about those issues and concerns, why did they not consider them and change the design? I think the bigger question today and most important question is what are they going to do in the future to protect motorists?”

The bridge reopened just before 6 p.m. after it was inspected by an engineer.

The wild weather also caused BC Ferries to cancel sailings on its major routes, flights were delayed at Vancouver International Airport and electrical wires were knocked down across the region.

More than 35,000 customers in the Lower Mainland also reported power outages, while transit was delayed due to icy conditions and buses getting stuck on slushy roads.

David Pensato tweeted this photo of his smashed windshield, broken by a falling chuck of ice from the Port Mann Bridge. DAVID PENSATO/TWITTER.COM

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Snowboarder saved. Now rescue equipment needs to be recovered

Rescue teams saved a snowboarder who was missing on Cypress for two days, but now they have equipment that needs rescuing.

"Our priority right now is getting all our equipment back in order," Tim Jones, spokesperson for North Shore Rescue, said Wednesday, a day after the dramatic rescue of Sebastian Boucher.

Jones said they're unsure of what the equipment will cost, but that there's a lot of it still left in the gully where they found Boucher.

"We're unsure if we'll be able to get some of it."

The team plans on getting together later this week to attempt its recovery.

They rescued Boucher Tuesday night by following his tracks into a deep gully and then winching him out by helicopter.

"He was very happy, he was in a very difficult position. He was a tough guy but he was in an area where, if hypothermia wouldn't have killed him, he would have fallen." CARA MCKENNA/METRO

Union

Steelworkers claim close ties between China, coal mine

The Steelworkers union says it's dug up close ties between the Chinese company planning to import workers for its proposed northeastern B.C. coal mine and the Chinese government. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Greenwood, B.C.

Charges laid in motel robbery

Six charges have been laid against each of two Calgary men who allegedly bound and robbed a motel clerk in a south central B.C. town.

Charanjeet Singh Khosa and Ravinder Singh Mettla, both in their 20s, will make a court appearance Thursday in connection with the robbery. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dreaming of a white Christmas

A woman braves the snow near the Cambie Street Bridge in Vancouver Wednesday morning. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

'Praying, begging, hoping.' Climatologist says Vancouverites in for another green Christmas

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
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Dreaming of a white Christmas? Sorry to burst your bubble, but Canada's top weatherman says you'll have to do more than dream for it to become a reality.

"All the snow you (got Wednesday), what nature giveth will be taketh away by (Thursday)," said Environment Canada's senior climatologist David Phillips.

"You're going to have to do more than dreaming of a white Christmas," he added. "You're going to have to be praying, begging and hoping."

Vancouver has only had one white Christmas in 13 years and this is not going to be another one, Phillips said.

Residents of other parts of the Lower Mainland, Victoria and Vancouver Island won't be seeing a winter wonderland when they wake up Christmas morning either.

"You're going to have to make your festive merriment indoors, not outdoors," he said. "Nature's not going to make it easy for you to feel in the Christmas mood because it's going to be rain and cloud."

Whistler, Grouse Mountain and places in higher elevations will be getting snow so Vancouverites have the "best of both worlds."

According to Phillips Environment Canada has kept track since 1955 and the only time there was a white Christmas from coast to coast in Canada was in 2008.

Weather

Christmas Day in Vancouver, from 1937 to 2012:

- **Warmest.** 2005: 14.3 C
- **Coldest.** 1964: -12.2 C
- **Rainiest.** 1972: 89 millimetres
- **Snowiest.** 1971: almost 18 centimetres
- **Deepest snow.** 2008: 41 centimetres

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MATT KIELTYKA/METRO FILE

ADRIAN DIX

REFLECTING ON 2012

2013 will be a big year for NDP Leader Adrian Dix. After all, he ends 2012 as the favourite — if recent polls are accurate — to become B.C.'s next premier in the provincial election. But that doesn't mean he spent this year staring at a crystal ball. Metro caught up with Dix Wednesday to discuss the year that was, and the issues that defined it.

MATT KIELTYKA
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On Missing Women Inquiry recommendations:

"I'm actually writing a letter to the Premier Wednesday about the recommendations. We want to see action and not have the recommendations thrown away because we're in an election cycle. Let's sit down together with the premier and Steven Point and see what progress we can make. I think the families in particular deserve that. We can put partisanship to the side and work together on it."

Dix said the region must have a discussion on policing models, but would not commit to a regional police force. He echoed the government's position that a consensus would be difficult to come by.

On Vancouver and Surrey competing for transit funding:

"In 2008, the Liberals got mad at the mayors and changed the governance as part of a tempter tantrum. And things have been bad since then, frankly. Even planned service is being cut because there isn't funding for it. The system is broken."

If elected, Dix promises to return to a governance structure for TransLink similar to quasi-government model used by the transportation authority before 2008.

"We have to shift authority back to the mayors," he said.

He also said carbon-tax revenue should be invested back into transit, and not "to subsidize tax cuts to big business."

On Vancouver losing movie-production and digital-entertainment jobs to Ontario:

The lure of 40 per cent tax breaks (compared to B.C.'s 17.5) has been too much to ignore for some of Vancouver's most lucrative industries.

"It's a real problem for us, something we have to assess," said Dix. "In some cases, Ontario essentially pays people to fly back and forth from Hollywood in private jets."

Dix agrees with Liberals that Ontario's tax breaks are unsustainable, but says it's a problem B.C. can't ignore.

"It's doing real damage to us in British Columbia," he said. "We're already giving significant support (to production companies), but I think part of the industry's frustration is the government hasn't been listening much. We have a candidate, Matt Toner, in Vancouver–False Creek who is heavily involved in the video-game industry and we're looking to have those discussions."

On liquid-natural-gas development:

Premier Christy Clark said last week that liquid natural gas can be British Columbia's answer to Alberta's oilsands. Dix doesn't disagree but cautioned Clark's claim could be an exaggeration.

"It's important we develop LNG, but we need a diverse, dynamic economy. Not just one industry, but many," he said. "(NDP critic) Bruce Ralston warned the government overestimated natural-gas revenues (in the 2012 budget), and that's what happened."

On coming into his own:

Many pundits have commented Dix seems more confident and assured as the year goes on, as if he's come into his own as a public figure. While flattered, he doesn't feel he's changed much since making the shift from MLA to Opposition leader. What has changed is his profile.

"I think I'm more known," he said. "It tests you in different ways. You represent much broader issues as leader. But I've always tried to be respectful for people and respectful of being critical."

The biggest adjustments have been being in the spotlight more and reaching out to groups that don't traditionally support the NDP.

"I must have had 230 meetings with business leaders, where the Liberals tend to only talk to people that support them," he said. "I've learned a lot. Hopefully that's made me a more thoughtful and better leader."

On the most significant issue of 2012:

"The most significant story of the last decade we've had is this issue of skills shortage. It really defined this year with the HD Mining story," Dix said.

The uproar over having Chinese workers working in British Columbia mines encapsulates a worst-case scenario for Dix, who has spent the last few years advocating for increased access to post-secondary education and criticizing the government for turning its back on trade apprenticeships.

"It's really about the Liberals' failure to address skills training, and here they got it so wrong," he said. "Every business person I meet says skills training should be a high priority. It makes sense: B.C. benefits from it."

Next on the hot seat

Pick up your Metro tomorrow to read our interview with Premier Christy Clark in which she discusses 2012, her thoughts on what British Columbians can expect in 2013 and the upcoming provincial election.

Premier Christy Clark METRO

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UBC scientists play role in biggest discoveries of 2012

Physics World.
Professors responsible for joint-discovery of Higgs-like particle

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
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University of B.C. physicists and astronomers played prominent roles in three of Physics World's top 10 breakthroughs of 2012.

Physics World, the world's leading physics magazine, named the discovery of a Higgs-like particle at the Large Hadron Collider by ATLAS and CMS collaborations at CERN as the most important physics breakthrough of the year.

UBC physics professors Colin Gay, Alison Lister and Dave Axen, among others, were part of the two international teams responsible for the joint discovery.

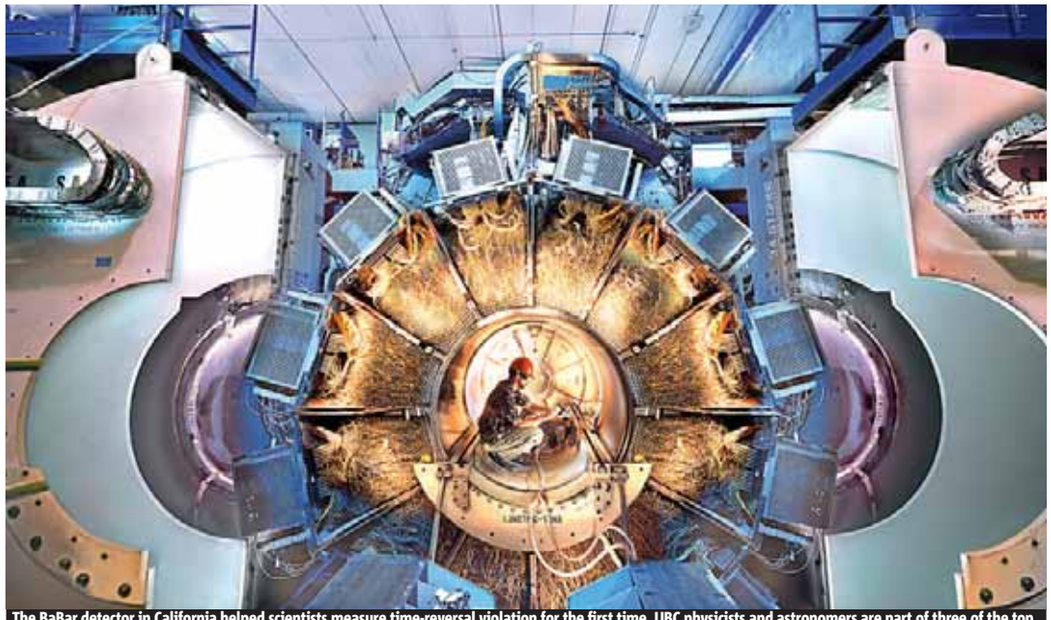
Physicists have had their eyes on the elusive Higgs boson — the elementary particle said to be responsible for all the mass in the universe — for 50 years, so the discovery of the Higgs-like particle in July caused a media frenzy.

Astronomy professor Mark Halpern and his colleagues were part of a team that used the Atacama cosmology telescope to measure the bulk motion of galaxy clusters.

"We measured the rate at which they're falling from gravity, which tells us how much they weigh," Halpern said Wednesday, adding the information will help scientists understand dark matter and dark energy.

"It allows us to know if we've really seen all the stuff that there is in the universe or if we're still missing something," he added.

Meanwhile, physics professors Chris Hearty, Janis McKenna, Tom Mattison and students Dave Asgeirsson and Rocky So helped scientists measure time-reversal violation for the first time using the BaBar detector in California. It's one step closer to verifying the quantum-field theory.



The BaBar detector in California helped scientists measure time-reversal violation for the first time. UBC physicists and astronomers are part of three of the top four breakthroughs of 2012 in Physics World's annual list of greatest achievements in the field. KELSEY CHAMBER/CONTRIBUTED

Drop-in centre ramps up services following inquiry

Kate Gibson of the WISH drop-in centre poses for a photo last week in Vancouver. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

Kate Gibson needs a lot of advice.

After spending years helping to run a widely respected drop-in service for sex-trade workers on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside on the thinnest of shoestrings, the executive director of WISH has been told the centre will get an extra $750,000 per year from the provincial government.

The money was announced earlier this week by Justice Minister Shirley Bond, about an hour after the commissioner of an inquiry into Vancouver's missing women made funding for an around-the-clock drop-in centre a key recommendation.

"There will be more meals at whatever time of day that we're open," said Gibson, listing off some of the changes.

"Obviously, overnight there will be meals and snacks. So it will mean a substantial increase in our food budget. Obviously, we don't have staff, so there will be a large ramping up of staff to cover those shifts overnight, and the facility will have to be managed in a new way because it will have a lot more use."

The drop-in centre opened in 1987 with a base in a Downtown Eastside church and moved in 2009 to its own facility. The centre began helping just a few women a night, but that has grown from between 50 to 200 women every night.

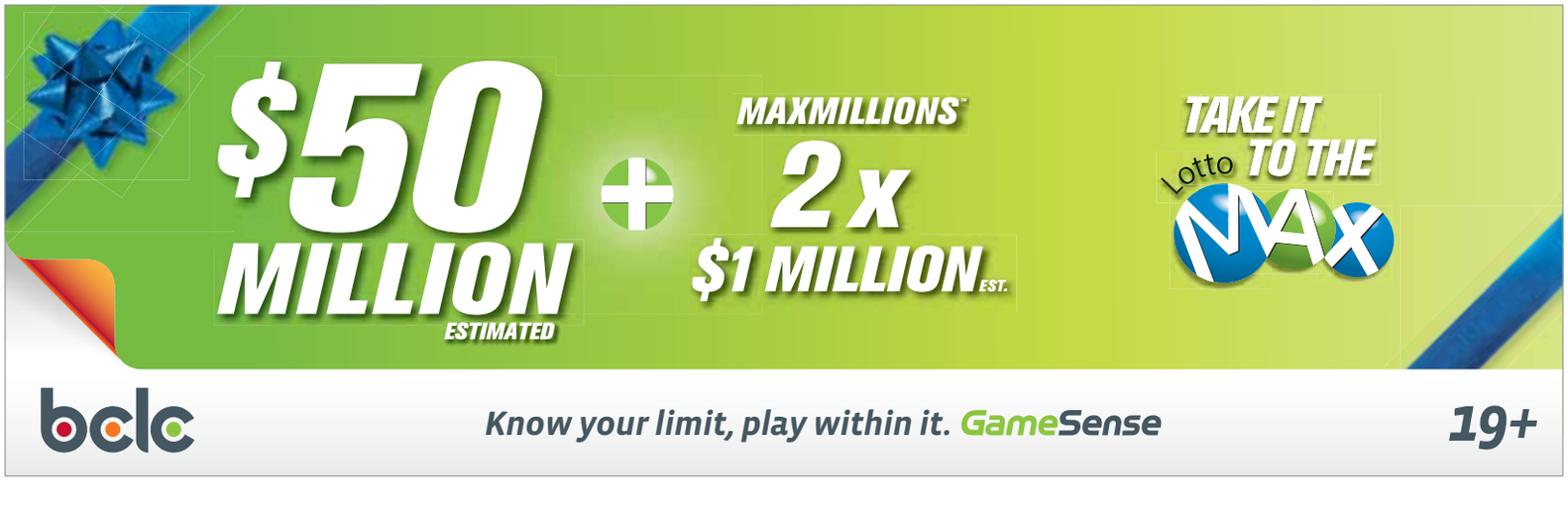
In May, commissioner Wally Oppal told the inquiry a 24-hour centre for sex-trade workers was a "no brainer."

Dave Dickson, who was a well-known beat cop in the Downtown Eastside and later served as a sex-work liaison officer for the Vancouver police, told the inquiry that WISH had a proven track record and should be the model for such a service.

WISH provides hot meals, showers, nursing care, referrals to other programs and safety notices, such as bad dates. Several of serial killer Robert Pickton's victims used WISH's services.

Pickton was convicted of killing six women, but the remains or DNA of 33 women was found on his Port Coquitlam, B.C., pig farm. He trolled the Downtown Eastside for his victims.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Financial guide. Three B.C. charities get top grades

Generally speaking, the best way to choose a charity during the holidays is to go with your heart, but if your pocketbook pipes up too there's an online guide that can help you get the most bang for your philanthropic buck.

MoneySense Magazine's Charity 100 uses publicly available data from the Canada Revenue Agency each year to assign grades to Canada's largest charities.

B.C. charities that continually top the list are the BC SPCA and Vancouver Foundation, both of which garnered A+'s this year, and the United Way of the Lower Mainland, which scored an A–.

"We look at overall charity efficiency — that's basically how much money a charity is spending on programs as opposed to other things," said MoneySense Magazine deputy editor Sarah Efron. "We look at fundraising efficiency, so how much does it cost for a charity to raise $100? We like to see charities being efficient with their fundraising methods."

The guide also assesses governance and transparency, and how healthy organizations' bank accounts are, favouring those with reserves that are neither strained nor bloated.

KATE WEBB/METRO

'Disdain for the court'

Fish-farm critic rebuked by judge

A salmon-farming critic who recently won a defamation case in B.C. Supreme Court has been rebuked financially for his conduct during the trial by the judge.

Don Staniford was awarded only 25 per cent of his costs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Drug-possession case

Man's sentence reduced for judge's vertigo

The B.C. Appeal Court has reduced a man's sentence to 18 months from two years after the trial judge said he had a sudden case of vertigo and questioned his own fairness.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dominant people get ahead, UBC study shows

Who's the boss. People observed groups of strangers and accurately predicted who would become leader in 120 seconds or less

CARA MCKENNA
vancouver@metronews.ca

Ever wonder why pushy people always seem to get ahead?

A new study from the University of British Columbia (UBC) found two sets of skills that will get you to the top of the social or corporate ladder: dominance and prestige.

In other words, being nice isn't going to get you all that far.

"Being likable doesn't consistently lead you to have better status," said Joey Cheng, PhD candidate in UBC's psychology department and lead author of the study.

"It's sort of less relevant."

According to a new study from UBC, those with an aggressive approach, such as Donald Trump, get ahead in corporate and social situations.

MATTHEW CAVANAUGH/GETTY IMAGES

Cheng explains prestige as appearing to be skilled and competent, and dominance as simply being aggressive.

"What we're trying to suggest is that these findings explain why in our modern society we see some leaders as being dominant," she said.

"We talk about people like Obama: He's clearly somebody who is well-respected and admired and people choose to listen to him. Someone like Donald Trump is pretty aggressive but people give him lots of power and influence."

In the study, people observed groups of strangers and were able to accurately predict who would become leader of the group in 120 seconds or less.

"In some ways it is surprising because, in psychology, traditionally the view has been only competent people get ahead and you cannot use force and aggression to get status and influence," said Cheng.

She added that, in the animal world, aggression and dominance are often the way power is gained, so it is not so surprising.

"We're worried about what (someone like) Trump would do if you don't listen, if you don't follow, because he seems to be able to do all sorts of things. Prestige is our voluntary status we give them whereas the other kind is imposed and sort of more forced approach."

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India incensed over gang rape on bus

New Delhi. Protesters, politicians demand action after attacks shock a nation

The hours-long gang rape and near-fatal beating of a 23-year-old student on a bus in New Delhi triggered outrage and anger across India on Wednesday as protesters demanded action from authorities who have long ignored persistent violence and harassment against women.

In the streets and in Parliament, calls rose for stringent and swift punishment against those who attack women, including a proposal to make rapists eligible for the death penalty. As the calls for action grew louder, two more gang rapes were reported, including one in which a 10-year-old victim was killed.

Thousands of demonstrators clogged the streets in front of New Delhi's police headquarters, protested near Parliament and rallied outside a major university. Angry university students set up roadblocks across the city, causing massive traffic jams.

Hundreds rallied outside the home of the city's top elected official before police dispersed them with water cannons, a move that earned further condemnation from opposition leaders, who accused the government of being insensitive.

"We want to jolt people awake from the cozy comfort of their cars. We want people to feel the pain of what women go through every day," said Aditi Roy, a Delhi University student.

Police on Wednesday fished out the body of a 10-year-old girl from a canal in Bihar state's Saharsa district. Police superintendent Ajit Kumar Satyarthi said the girl had been gang-raped and killed and her body dumped in the canal. Police were investigating and a breakthrough was expected soon, Satyarthi said.

The 23-year-old victim lay in critical condition in the hospital with severe internal injuries, doctors said.

Police said six men raped the woman and savagely beat her and her companion with iron rods on a bus driving around the city — passing through several police checkpoints — before stripping them and dumping them on the side of the road on Sunday night.

Delhi police chief Neeraj Kumar said four men have been arrested and a search was underway for the other two.

Sonia Gandhi, head of the ruling Congress Party, visited the victim, promised swift action against the perpetrators and called for police to be trained to deal with crimes against women.

In New Delhi and across India, the outpouring of anger is unusual in a country where attacks against women are rarely prosecuted.

Opposition politicians shouted slogans and protested outside Parliament and called for making rape a capital crime. Cutting across party affiliations, lawmakers demanded the government announce a plan to safeguard women in the city.

Analysts say crimes against women are on the rise as more young women leave their homes to join the workforce in India's booming economy, even as deep-rooted social attitudes that women are inferior remain unchanged. Many families look down on women, viewing the girl child as a burden that forces them to pay a huge dowry to marry her off.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Indian woman shouts slogans outside the Delhi police headquarters during Wednesday's protest in New Delhi following the rape of a 23-year-old student. ALTAF QADRI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yet another attack

On the same day of the protests, a young girl in India's Banka district of Bihar was allegedly raped by four men.

- The 14-year-old was in critical condition after the attack, a district education officer said.
- The suspected rapists have been identified, but police have yet to make any arrests.

Quoted

"I feel it is sick what is happening across the country and it needs to stop."

Smitha, a 32-year-old protester
Criticizing the Indian mindset on sexual assault and violence against women.

Pedophile probe absolves BBC bosses of coverup

Institutional chaos and confusion — but not a coverup — were to blame for the BBC's disastrous handling of pedophilia allegations involving one of its best-known children's television personalities, an internal review found on Wednesday.

The review, carried out by former Sky News boss Nick Pollard, absolved BBC executives of trying to bury a potentially embarrassing story, saying that weak management and poor leadership were to blame for the fact that a planned exposé of the late TV star Jimmy Savile never aired on the flagship Newsnight program.

When the rival ITV network broadcast a similar exposé in October about Savile, who died in 2011 at the age of 84, the BBC came under fire for both harbouring an alleged serial sex abuser for decades and killing its own story about him.

"The Newsnight investigators got the story right," Pollard said. "They had found clear and compelling evidence that Jimmy Savile was a pedophile."

He said the decision by news executives to scrap the item "was clearly flawed, and the way it was taken was wrong, though I believe it was taken in good faith."

The review said the BBC was thrown into disarray when allegations that Savile was a serial sexual predator were made public, taking more than a month to get a handle on the situation.

The scandal has since metastasized, tainting the reputation of the BBC. It also forced the resignation of the BBC's new director-general, George Entwistle, and raised questions about its former leader, Mark Thompson, who has since become chief executive at The New York Times.

The BBC's decision to cancel its initial investigation in December 2011 over the objections of its reporters was one of the scandal's most embarrassing episodes, especially as it preceded a glowing tribute to Savile's career broadcast the same month. The timing and the circumstances of the cancellation raised questions about whether senior executives tried to bury the story to protect the corporation's reputation.

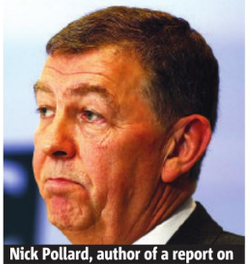
The report published Wednesday absolved the executives of that — the most serious — charge. The review cost the BBC $3.3 million.

The report does not appear to challenge Thompson's account of his role in the scandal — and Chris Patten, head of the BBC Trust, said after the review was published that he has "no reason at all for disbelieving" the former director-general.

Since the ITV documentary aired, scores of women have come forward, alleging they were abused by Savile when they were underage, sometimes in BBC dressing rooms. Police say Savile is a suspect in 199 crimes recorded so far, including dozens of cases of rape.

Two additional internal inquiries are still in the works.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS


Nick Pollard, author of a report on the BBC's handling of a pedophile scandal, speaks to the media about his findings on Wednesday in London, England. CHRIS RADBURN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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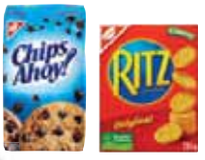

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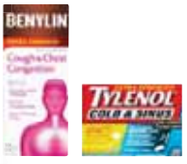

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Pension surplus

Big unions lose fight for $28B

The Supreme Court of Canada says several major public unions are not entitled to a $28-billion pension surplus the government hived off to help pay down the deficit.

The court ruled 9-0 that the government is not obliged to return the funds.

The unions argued the government improperly took their money.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Youth now key

Feds make point on immigration

The points system used to decide who can immigrate to Canada is getting a makeover.

The new judging criteria for the federal skilled worker program will award more points to younger immigrants and change the way the government looks at work experience and education.

The way points are allocated for language ability will also change.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hail the Cosmo Canuck!

Up, up and away. Chris Hadfield blasts off from Kazakhstan on a mission to head the International Space Station

No sleeping, please — you're spacemen. Russian cosmonaut Roman Romanenko, left, U.S. astronaut Tom Marshburn and Canada's Chris Hadfield play a little snoozing joke on the media after putting on their spacesuits before blast-off at the Baikonur Cosmodrome. Next stop: The International Space Station.

SHAMIL ZHUMATOV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Now call him Cosmo Chris.

Chris Hadfield has successfully blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

He was on his way Wednesday on a mission to become the first Canadian to command the International Space Station.

Hadfield is travelling to the space station on board a Russian Soyuz capsule for a five-month visit to the giant orbiting space lab.

He is sharing the trip to the space station with NASA astronaut Tom Marshburn and Russian cosmonaut Roman Romanenko. They're due to arrive Friday.

Gov. Gen. David Johnston called Hadfield's launch "a great day for Canada, a great day for the world of discovery and innovation."

He joined the families of Canadian Space Agency employees at its HQ south of Montreal to watch the event on a giant TV screen.

"We're so proud that Chris Hadfield now is up in space — the first Canadian to be commanding the space station in March," he said.

"And now we simply pray for a continued safe mission and a safe return."

During his stay, Hadfield, an avid guitar player, plans to do some strumming to help him deal with homesickness.

The 53-year-old space veteran will also be involved with more than 130 experiments including Micro-flow, a Canadian blood-sampling experiment that he compared to a hospital in a box.

Hadfield will become the first Canadian to command the space station during the second half of his mission.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Doomsday village greets aliens: CNN, BBC, CBS ...

There has been an invasion of strangers in the sleepy French hamlet of Bugarach.

Doomsday theories say this tiny village in the south of France will be the earth's only safe haven on Dec. 21 — the date the world will come to an end, according to erroneous interpretations of the ancient Mayan calendar.

As Friday draws near, local police and the French military are surrounding the village and closing off roads, just in case apocalyptic hordes do show up.

Now the village's two main streets are filling with people from all over the globe — though not of the New Age or End of Days variety. No, the strangers being encountered are of a third kind.

"It's all journalists — CNN, BBC, CBS News," says Patrice Etienne, who owns Bugarach's only store. "People from Sweden, England, Germany …" TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Dec. 21 scenario

Bugarach, says web talk, will transform into an extra-terrestial Noah's Ark.

- **Beam 'em up.** A spaceship will rise from a hangar under the village, beam up people and ferry them to some intergalactic safe haven — or so the story goes.

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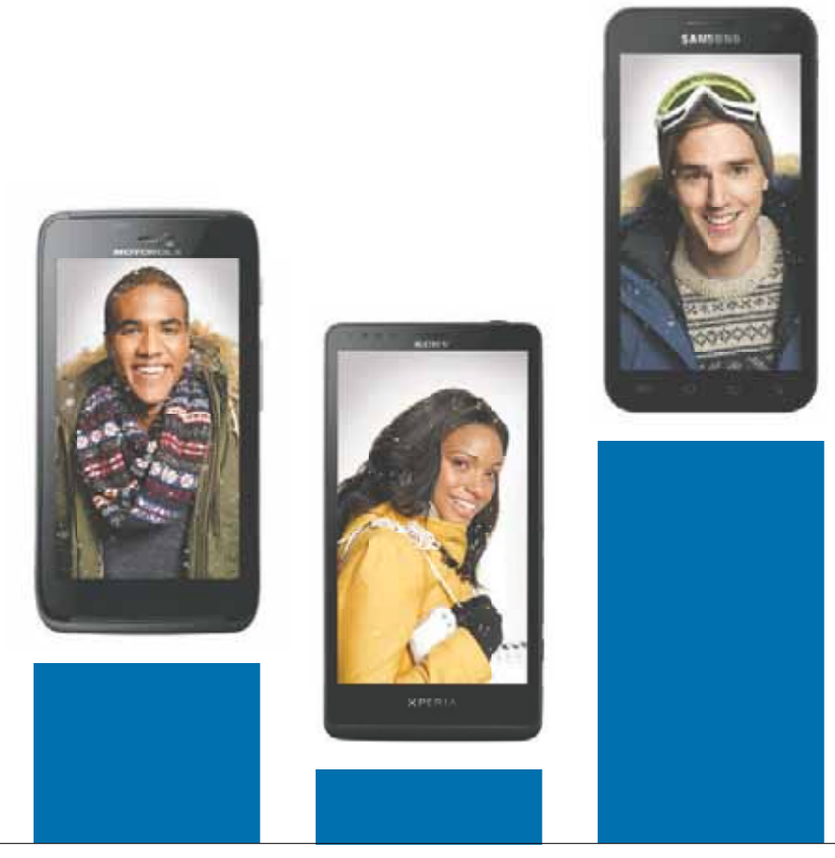

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- Panorama Village
- Semiahmoo Shopping Centre
- Surrey Central City Mall

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- 1100 Robson St
- 698 West Broadway
- 1588 West Broadway
- 2154 West 4th
- Capilano Mall
- Chinatown Plaza
- Lynn Valley Centre
- Oakridge Centre
- Pacific Centre
- Park Royal S

OKANAGAN

KAMLOOPS
- Aberdeen Mall
- Lansdowne Village

KELOWNA
- Dilworth Shopping Centre
- Orchard Park Shopping Centre

PENTICTON
- Peachtree Square

PRINCE GEORGE
- Pine Centre

VERNON
- Village Green Mall

VANCOUVER ISLAND

NANAIMO
- Country Club Centre
- Woodgrove Centre

VICTORIA
- 3500 Uptown Boulevard
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- Hillside Shopping Centre
- Mayfair Shopping Centre
- Tillicum Centre
- Westshore Town Centre

Obama wants ‘real progress, right now’

Tough tone. President invokes 2nd amendment freedoms and recent spate of killings in proactive address

No excuses

“The fact that this problem is complex can no longer be an excuse for doing nothing.”

Barack Obama

U.S. President Barack Obama on Wednesday demanded “concrete proposals” on curbing gun violence that he could send to Congress no later than January — an urgent effort to build on the growing political consensus over gun restrictions following last week’s massacre of children at a Connecticut school.

It was a tough new tone for the president, whose first four years were largely quiet on the issue amid widespread political reluctance to tackle a powerful gun-rights lobby. But emotions have been high after the gunman in Friday’s shooting used a semi-automatic rifle to kill 20 young children and six adults at the school, after killing his mother at home.

“This time, the words need to lead to action,” Obama said. He said he will push legislation “without delay” and urged Congress to hold votes on the bill next year.

“The fact that we can’t prevent every act of violence doesn’t mean we can’t steadily reduce the violence,” Obama said.

The policy process Obama was announcing Wednesday was expected to include input from the departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services. The Department of Homeland Security is also expected to play a key role. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama stands with Vice-President Joe Biden as he makes a statement Wednesday at the White House. Biden, a longtime gun-control advocate, will be spearheading efforts for a new gun policy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Funeral processions continue in Newtown

Firefighters wait for a procession at the main intersection in the village of Newtown, Conn., on Wednesday, as they pay respects to Daniel Gerard Barden, one of the students killed during the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting. The small, quiet town has seen gridlock traffic caused by funeral processions, as well as the large number of national and international media covering the aftermath of the shooting. Barden, 7, was killed when the gunman, Adam Lanza, walked into the school last Friday and opened fire, killing 26 people, including 20 children, before killing himself.

JULIO CORTEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Going too far? Bulletproof backpack maker’s sales up 300%

Parents reeling in the wake of the Connecticut school shooting are fuelling sales of armoured backpacks for children, as firearms enthusiasts stock up on assault rifles nationwide amid fears of imminent gun control measures.

U.S. armour manufacturer Amendment II’s sales of children backpacks and armoured inserts are up 300 per cent.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A children’s backpack with an anti-ballistic insert is shot with a 9-mm pistol. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Guns in Canada. Tories repeal gun-show rules

The Conservative government has repealed federal gun-show regulations, on the advice of the same controversial advisory committee the prime minister recently rebuked.

The changes kill a set of rules that were introduced by the Liberals in 1998, but never brought into force after years of deferrals.

The regulations would have required the sponsor of a gun show to notify police and the chief firearms officer of the province before an event, and to ensure the security and safety of the location and the guns.

The government says it consulted Public Safety Minister Vic Toews’ Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee, which felt the vast majority already follow the rules.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Stephen Harper rejected the committee’s other recommendations to loosen certain gun control laws.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Smarten up. IQ tests too simple in complex ways, researcher warns

A new study released Wednesday suggests IQ tests aren't all they're cracked up to be.

"I think IQ tests are a massive over-simplification," said Adam Hampshire, one-half of the team of researchers who debunked the IQ myth.

"I would be incredibly skeptical of their results."

Traditional IQ tests favour one type of intelligence, said Hampshire. But people can be smart in multiple ways.

Hampshire and his partner Adrian Owen, from Western University's Brain and Mind Institute, created a new test that was able to gauge a person's intelligence in a variety of streams.

It was posted online and gathered tens of thousands of hits in just a few weeks.

"The day the initial trial went live, thousands of people signed on and they broke it," said Hampshire. "People started emailing their scores and putting them on Facebook, challenging their friends and it went viral.

"It was exhilarating and remarkably stressful."

The massive response gave the duo a broad sample of information about people from around the world aged 12 to 70.

The study found that there are three main types of intelligence. One relates to short-term memory, another deals with reason and logic, and the last shows a person's strength at variable testing.

AMANDA GRANT/ FOR METRO IN LONDON

How do you rate?

The average person scores 70 to 130 on an intelligence quotient test.

- **The genius.** Albert Einstein had a score of 160 and was a member of the high IQ society, as is Stephen Hawking with the same score.
- **Take a test.** Visit cambridgebrainsciences.com/the IQ challenge to take the new test and see where you stand on the intelligence spectrum.

A New Year's bow tie awaits Ikea monkey

Little primate's a viral star. Yasmin Nakhuda says Darwin was taken from her illegally and she's facing a court fight on Thursday

Yasmin Nakhuda leads a protest Wednesday at Toronto Animal Services in a bid to get her pet monkey Darwin back. Darwin became an international viral sensation after being found in an Ikea parking lot.

TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Yasmin Nakhuda has everything ready for her little monkey to come home:

A tiny Santa Claus suit for Christmas, a bow tie for New Year's, and a cottage rented in Kawartha Lakes, where it's not yet illegal to own a monkey.

On Thursday she'll be asking the court to return Darwin swiftly.

On Dec. 9, Darwin was found wandering in a north Toronto Ikea parking lot.

A photo of him in a faux-shearling coat soon made its way to Twitter and from there spread around the world.

It even landed Darwin a nod from The Guardian newspaper in its 10 fashion moments of the year.

Bylaw officials asked Nakhuda to surrender the animal and they fined her $240 under the Toronto Municipal Code for keeping a prohibited animal.

The opposing side in her court case is requesting an adjournment, something that would give Kawartha Lakes time to enact an exotic-animals ban already in the pipeline.

Speaking outside Toronto Animal Services, Nakhuda talked about the trauma.

"Unless you've owned a primate, you cannot understand what it is to lose one," said Nakhuda, who works as a real-estate lawyer.

About 30 supporters, many friends and family members, attended a protest Wednesday at the Toronto Animal Services location.

Nakhuda's children — 16-year-old Omar and 12-year-old Misha — held signs that featured a picture of Darwin behind bars and read: "Free Darwin now!"

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Man arrested

Now the joke's on the clown

There was nothing funny about a clown who stopped by a credit union in Winnipeg.

The man — who police said Wednesday was dressed like a clown, complete with a pair of fake breasts — also allegedly had a gun and robbed the credit union of an undisclosed amount of cash.

A man was arrested later and is facing charges. **METRO IN WINNIPEG**

Canada not so jolly

Happy? You're in Latin America

The world's happiest people aren't in Qatar, the richest country by most measures. They aren't in Japan, the nation with the highest life expectancy. Canada doesn't make the top 10.

A poll released Wednesday of nearly 150,000 people around the world says seven of the world's 10 countries with the most upbeat attitudes are in Latin America.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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How will you spend your last night on Earth?

"I wouldn't do anything differently. I just don't see the point. I'm not a crazy guy to begin with."
Evaan Kheraj, Vancouver

"I would probably spend it with my family and friends. I don't really know what else to say."
Diane Leng, Calgary

"I can't say what I'd really do because it's not appropriate to print in a newspaper."
Luke Kellener, Fernie, B.C./Perth, Ont.

"I'm a space fan, so I would like to ... look up at the outer world with (my son) one last time."
Barry Obondo, Edmonton

"I would get a plane to Australia .... though I probably wouldn't get there in 24 hours."
Elaine Fitzpatrick, Saskatoon

"I would live it up with all my friends and family and I wouldn't even think about tomorrow."
Jaci Youngson, Regina

Doom awaits us — later

2012 prophecy. The world won't end on Dec. 21, experts say, but there are plenty of ways Earth could go

KIERON MONKS
Metro World News in London

It was fun while it lasted, but it seems the world is ending. A growing clamour, based on the Mayan calendar, insists that Dec. 21, 2012, will mark the death of humanity. Even NASA has received thousands of terrified messages from the public.

But the calendar has been misinterpreted, say experts, who claim the "end" refers only to the end of a cycle. The Mayan calendar is split into 394-year "baktuns," and 2012 will see a new era.

"The 13th Baktun will end on Dec. 21, and another will start," says Ines Valera-Silva, a researcher in Mayan studies at Loughborough University in the U.K. "That's all. A catastrophe has never been predicted."

Mayans today have stopped using the old calendar, Valera-Silva adds. "There is no reason to interpret this as a prophecy, but obviously some people are excited by it."

Who'll look the fool if Earth does end? Worshippers gather at Kukulkan temple at Chichén Itzá, Mexico. CUARTOSCURO

Hollywood movies and social media have driven the debate on exactly how the world will end. One Facebook page with 13,000 fans suggests it will come from a cosmic event.

"The biggest threat is a comet impact," says Benny Peiser, catastrophe specialist and founder of climate policy network CCNet. "It happens every few million years and could happen at any time. Astronomers are scanning the sky for potential risks, and we need to solve the problem for good by developing the technology to deflect asteroids."

More speculators believe a black hole will open and swallow us all. The fear led to widespread criticism of scientists working on the Large Hadron Collider, rumoured to be capable of producing a black hole.

Humankind may not need cosmic forces to bring down Armageddon. The Cold War may be over, but the number of nuclear nations has grown swiftly — and with it, the risk of a "final war."

"It's no secret how to make the weapons and it's not hard to think of people crazy enough to use them," says Alan Robock, environmental scientist at Rutgers University and author of Nuclear Winter Revisited.

Threat of terrorism aside, Robock sees a risk in regional feuds between nuclear powers India and Pakistan or Israel and Iran.

Environmentalists point to rising sea levels and the threat of a supervolcano, while nanotechnology may yet produce microorganisms that kill us from the inside.

The endless possibilities explain the interest in bookmaker William Hill's offer of 1,000,000-to-1 on the world ending.

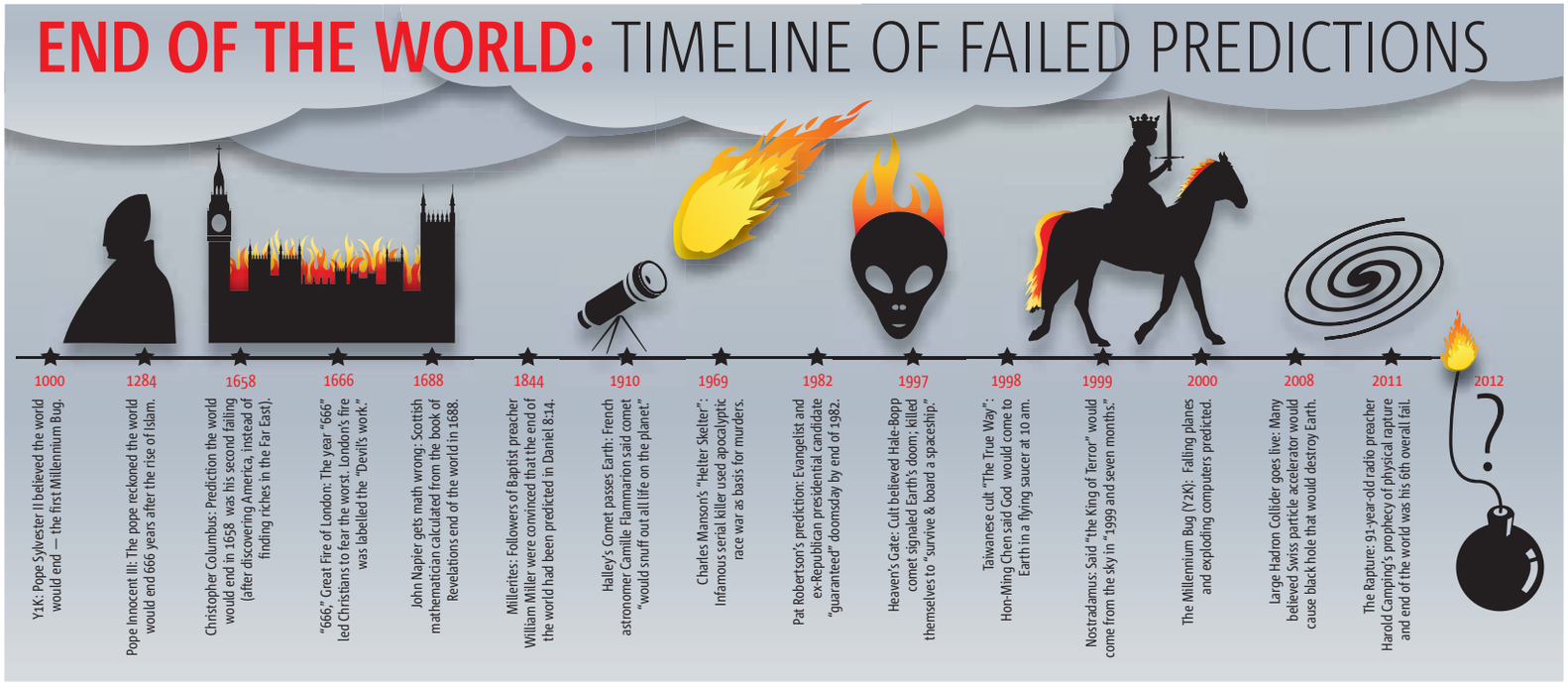
"Some may say it is a bet we can never lose, for the obvious reason that we won't be here to pay out should it happen," spokesman Graham Sharpe says, but several bets have already been placed.

Apocalypse options

- **Comet strike.** Still the most immediate threat; likely to be sudden. **Fear factor: 7/10**
- **Nuclear war.** An ever-present threat and probably more likely than world peace. **FF: 6/10**
- **Global warming.** The rising sea is already threatening some islands. **FF: 4/10**
- **Disease pandemic.** Could happen but unlikely to catch us by surprise. **FF: 2/10**
- **Sun burnout.** A sure thing but will be in 4.5 billion years' time. **FF: 0/10**

Bedtime reading: This Mayan manuscript suggests an end to a calendar cycle. GETTY IMAGES

END OF THE WORLD: TIMELINE OF FAILED PREDICTIONS


1000
Y1K: Pope Sylvester II believed the world would end — the first Millennium Bug.
1284
Pope Innocent III: The pope reckoned the world would end 666 years after the rise of Islam.
1658
Christopher Columbus: Prediction the world would end in 1658 was his second failing (after discovering America, instead of finding riches in the Far East).
1666
"666," Great Fire of London: The year "666" led Christians to fear the worst. London's fire was labelled the "Devil's work."
1688
John Napier gets math wrong: Scottish mathematician calculated from the book of Revelations end of the world in 1688.
1844
Millerites: Followers of Baptist preacher William Miller were convinced that the end of the world had been predicted in Daniel 8:14.
1910
Halley's Comet passes Earth: French astronomer Camille Flammarion said comet "would snuff out all life on the planet."
1969
Charles Manson's "Helter Skelter": Infamous serial killer used apocalyptic race war as basis for murders.
1982
Pat Robertson's prediction: Evangelist and ex-Republican presidential candidate "guaranteed" doomsday by end of 1982.
1997
Heaven's Gate: Cult believed Hale-Bopp comet signaled Earth's doom; killed themselves to "survive & board a spaceship."
1998
Taiwanese cult "The True Way": Hon-Ming Chen said God would come to Earth in a flying saucer at 10 am.
1999
Nostradamus: Said "the King of Terror" would come from the sky in "1999 and seven months."
2000
The Millennium Bug (Y2K): Falling planes and exploding computers predicted.
2008
Large Hadron Collider goes live: Many believed Swiss particle accelerator would cause black hole that would destroy Earth.
2011
The Rapture: 91-year-old radio preacher Harold Camping's prophecy of physical rapture and end of the world was his 6th overall fail.
2012
?

"Disney World.... Where else would you rather be but the happiest place on Earth?"

Chris Hancock, Winnipeg

"I already live every day like it's the last. So, (I'd) just carry on. I don't make future plans."

Andrew Goddard, London, Ont.

"Blissfully ignorant that it is the last day on Earth. I just would not want to be aware."

Candice McCavitt, Toronto

"I would make a list of everyone in my life that I had something important to say to."

Kirk Raybould, Toronto

"I would break all the laws, all the rules. No drugs, no alcohol: It's not something you need at the end."

Fred Labonte, Ottawa

"I'd probably buy unlimited sushi ... drink a lot and not worry about the hangover the next day."

Leanne Stevens, Halifax

ERIKA PADRÓN
Metro World News in Mexico

DECEMBER 21 MAKES MAYANS LAUGH

Native Mayan José Natividad Ic Xec tells Metro the calendar's end has nothing to do with the world's end

José Natividad Ic Xec, a native Mayan living in Mérida, capital of Yucatán in Mexico, where the Mayan civilization once thrived, has dedicated his life to promoting his culture and tradition. Xec explains what the doomsday prophecy really means for his compatriots.

What does Dec. 21 mean to the Mayan people?
For Mayans living in Yucatán, this date means nothing. Like anyone else, we spend that day thinking about what we are going to eat, about our jobs or what the next few months will be like for us. This date was only conceived as a stage in a calendar, as Dec. 22 marks the end of 13 baktuns, (a baktun is a period of 394 years or 144,000 days). And so it's just the end of an era in a calendar.

So the end-of-the-world prophecy is all fantasy?
People speak of a revolution in human consciousness, a new light that will shine upon the world. Believers talk of some kind of transformation and will gather at the Mayan pyramids to perform some kind of ritual. But all of this is not attributed to the Maya; we really don't care about it — on the contrary, it makes us laugh. Our people know little about the ancient Mayan Long Count calendar. The only thing we know is that the date Dec. 22 marks an end in the calendar, but people are using the date Dec. 21 because it is the solstice and thus a more memorable date.

Then why is the date such a big deal?
Experts claim that the 13th baktun is a good opportunity for people to make a profit out of those who believe. And if those faithful genuinely believe in it, they would be frightened; they would look for a bunker or think about a plan of survival. So this end-of-the-world talk is only a bit of fun.

You use social networks to promote your culture. How popular is Chilam Balam (Xec's blog based on the Mayan document allegedly containing prophecies)?
It's a concept that I started two years ago, first on Twitter and Facebook, then on a blog, which I hope will continue to grow. On my website, I publish stories on Mayan culture and its characteristics.

Do you yourself have any plans to mark the Mayan event?
Yes, on Dec. 21 and 22, I will be doing live broadcasts from (ancient Mayan site) Chichén Itzá. I will be chatting to Mayans who live in the area. I want them to tell me about how they live. Perhaps they will perform some traditional dancing. I will also talk to other experts like myself who have worked their whole lives to promote Mayan culture. But for all this to happen, I need sponsors. But I'm aware that our old indigenous culture is not a big seller.

José Natividad Ic Xec

- **Age:** 49
- **Born:** Peto, a Mayan village in Yucatán.
- **Background:** Parents were Mayan speakers; grew up speaking Mayan and later learned Spanish; at the end of secondary school moved to Mérida, where he currently resides; worked at the Diario de Yucatán newspaper for 17 years; also studied at the Seminario Conciliar de Yucatán.

Doomsday industry still booming despite the lessons of the past

Are you done your apocalypse shopping yet? You could throw down $30,000 on a space in a luxury underground bunker or a cheaper "survival kit" that can help you eat grass. Apocalypse literature is booming, with sales from the Left Behind book series worth almost $1 billion.

It's a modern update of the paper "pardons" sold as insurance against judgment day in the Middle Ages. Many experts trace the birth of the apocalypse industry to the U.S. Millerite movement, when preacher William Miller launched a campaign to promote his vision of doomsday in the 1840s.

"Systematic commercialization first arose from fear of nuclear war in the 1960s, with companies building bomb shelters," says Lorne Dawson, sociologist and author of Prophetic Failure and Millennial Movements. "That showed the business opportunity, and it continued with the survivalist movement of the 1970s and the growing fear of an eco-catastrophe."

Doomsday plan: Dress up like a Mayan and party hard. CONTRIBUTED

The years 2000 and 2012 have revived the focus, and Dawson believes it taps into a basic human desire. "Simple psychology shows that people need to believe they do not live in chaos, that there is a higher purpose."

Doom preaching has drawn backlash following cases such as the 2011 suicide of British teenager Isabel Taylor. "It's an industry that exploits anxiety and can be dangerous," says Bill Hudson, astronomer and editor of the 2012hoax blog.

Even if 2012 passes without incident, don't expect the industry to stop. "Even when a theory is debunked, a core group tends to become even more fervent," says Hudson. "True believers are locked in. You can't reason someone out of a position they didn't reason themselves into."

KIERON MONKS/MWN IN LONDON, U.K.

Mexico. Prophecy injects billions into economy

It may be the end of the world, but certainly not for Mexico's economy. The Mayan prophecy will have attracted more than $15 billion in tourist revenue by the end of 2012 as millions flock to the country to discover its indigenous civilization.

Mexico's Ministry of Tourism predicts 52 million visitors will have come to Mexico by the end of 2012, many of whom will have visited the Mundo Maya (Quintana Roo, Yucatan and Campeche states).

"Today we are the 10th power for tourism in the world and we are working hard to be in the top five," outgoing President Felipe Calderon said.

Mexico put aside $10 million for a 2012 project last summer.

AGUSTÍN VELASCO/MWN IN MEXICO

Party like a Mayan

More than 500 Mayan-themed events will have taken place by the end of the year.

- **Festival Mundo Maya.** Folk festival that celebrates Mayan traditions in the Mexican city of Campeche until Dec. 30.
- **The Gran Museo del Mundo Maya.** Located in Merida, Yucatan's capital, the museum holds precious Mayan artifacts.
- **The End of the Long Count Mayan Calendar.** The 365-step pyramid of Chichén Itzá will host a ceremonial event on Dec. 21.

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Jeff Golby wears an oversized model of a penny on his head as he collects donations of one-cent coins for charity during this past summer's Canada Day festivities in Vancouver. The federal government is phasing out use of the Canadian penny, with the last one minted this past May. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Penny's end will cost Canadians a mint

Chump change. New analysis shows price tag for redeeming one-cent coins in circulation will be about $7.3M yearly

The demise of Canada's one-cent coin next year will save taxpayers less than expected.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced the impending withdrawal of the penny in last March's budget, saying the government would save $11 million a year in production costs.

That's because production of each one-cent coin had cost the Royal Canadian Mint about 1.6 cents. But a new analysis shows that redeeming the mountain of circulating pennies beginning Feb. 4 will cost taxpayers about $7.3 million a year.

The analysis projects a net cost of about $38.3 million to redeem some six billion pennies expected to be turned in by consumers and financial institutions over the next six years.

Costs include $53 million expected to be paid out to redeem the face value of the coins, as well as another $27 million in handling and administration costs by the Royal Canadian Mint.

Recycling the zinc and copper from melted-down pennies will bring in about $42.5 million in revenue, leaving government in the red at slightly more than $38 million. However, adding the $11 million in annual savings from not minting any more pennies still gives the government annual savings of almost $4 million over the expected six-year redemption period. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Philanthropy

Zuckerberg to donate $500M in Facebook stock

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said he is giving nearly $500 million US in stock to a Silicon Valley charity with the aim of funding health and education issues.

Zuckerberg donated 18 million Facebook shares, valued at $498.8 million US based on their Tuesday closing price. The beneficiary is the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, a non-profit that works with donors to allocate their gifts.

This is Zuckerberg's largest donation to date. He pledged $100 million US in Facebook stock to Newark, N.J., public schools in 2010, before his company went public earlier this year.

With the latest contribution, he said, "we will look for areas in education and health to focus on next." He did not give further details on what plans there may be for funds. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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†Pictures shown in frames sold separately. **TV bench offer excludes TV and media storage combinations, wall brackets and FRAMSTÅ series. © Inter IKEA Systems B.V. 2012.

In this Nov. 2010 photo, General Motors Co. CEO Daniel Akerson poses in front of the New York Stock Exchange following GM's initial public offering. On Wednesday, the U.S. government said it will sell its remaining stake in General Motors in the next year or so, winding down a controversial $50-billion US bailout. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

GM will spend $5.5B to buy back shares

Government bailout. Washington is almost certain to lose billions on deal that saved iconic automaker

The U.S. Treasury plans to sell its remaining stake in General Motors over the next 15 months, allowing the automaker to shed the stigma of being partly owned by the American government.

GM said Wednesday it will spend $5.5 billion US to buy back 200 million shares of its stock from the Treasury by the end of this year.

And the U.S. government, unlike its Canadian counterpart, has promised to sell its remaining 300 million shares on the open market starting in January and get out of the company's business within the next 12 to 15 months.

The deal almost certainly means that Washington will lose billions on the $49.5-billion US bailout that saved GM from being auctioned off in pieces during the financial crisis in 2008 and 2009. GM's buyback will cut the Treasury's stake to 19 per cent from 26.5 per cent.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Donations are better than gifts, majority of Canadians say

A man gives money to a Salvation Army holiday campaign in this file photo. A new study suggests almost two-thirds of Canadian adults would rather see a donation to charity given on their behalf than receive a gift this holiday season. The poll for BMO Harris Private Banking also found that 78 per cent of respondents would consider making that charitable donation rather than giving a traditional gift.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Oshawa, Ont.

GM shifts Camaro production to Michigan plant

General Motors is moving production of the next version of its Camaro sports car from its Oshawa operation in Ontario to a plant in Michigan, a move the union says will cost 1,000 jobs at the massive factory east of Toronto. The Canadian Auto Workers estimated the move, which could also affect parts companies, could cost as many as 9,000 jobs in the region after all the spinoff affects are included.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Safety concerns

Hyundai recalls Velosters over brakes, sunroofs

Hyundai is recalling thousands of late-model Velosters in the U.S. and Canada to fix problems involving parking brakes on some models and a sunroof that can shatter and cause injuries on others. The recall involving the sunroof affects cars from the 2012 model year, including 1,593 in Canada. The separate recall to fix parking brakes affects about 1,565 vehicles in Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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VEGAS: WHAT HAPPENS HERE IS WRITTEN IN A COLUMN

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Greetings, world travellers! The U.S. may have a Bible Belt to hold up the britches of the nation, but this week we look at Las Vegas, the city where pants are optional.

This luminous postage stamp in the middle of desert darkness is home to the American stereotype in all its glory. I have enough American friends to know the obvious — that the U.S. is incredibly diverse — but here in Vegas I'm surrounded by large boobs (not literally), large food (I had a crab cake with the same size and heft of a curling stone) and large cars (my "compact" rental could comfortably seat a starting hockey lineup wearing its gear).

After four days here, I have compiled this exhaustive, 350-word guide to Sin City, which contains oodles of useful information for your trip to Las Vegas. (LEGAL DISCLAIMER: This column contains no useful information about anything.)

Las Vegas 101

Las Vegas, literally "Lots of Neon," was founded by itinerant escorts and slot-machine builders in the 1930s, who dreamed of a new America where all the worst jobs in the country could be concentrated in one place. Here you'll find tens of thousands of service workers who must put up with customers in a perpetual "Listen here, friend" state of 1-a.m. drunkenness, and the servers do it all with a smile — a tight, painful smile. You will pity tip more than you ever have in your entire life.

Fortunately, you'll have plenty of opportunities to distract yourself. For instance, while newspaper boxes lie empty in much of the United States, Vegas does a booming media trade with such well-respected publications as Barely Legal, College Girls! and Alt. Who Says Print is Dead?

And did you know that in Las Vegas it's legal to gamble? The only rule is that the gambling must take place in a one-third replica of some other place on Earth.

The casino resorts include:

- The Venetian, which has an exact replica of the Venice canals, right down to the neon-rimmed gondolas, the ice-skating rink and the country-western band playing covers on the hour. Viva Italia!
- New York, New York, which for just $5 extra will give you a one-third mugging.
- The Bellagio, famous for its fountains, which are a replica of the Eastern European country Bellagistan and its three-times-bigger fountains.
- One shopping mall also looks like a (really) cheap one-third knock-off of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, so presumably there'll soon be a really earnest but widely disliked resort here soon with the slogan "A World-Class Casino ... Aren't We?"

Vegas could be tempting to dismiss as low-rent or vulgar, but unlike many other cities, it knows exactly what it is. And if you don't like it, well, nobody told you to travel to the middle of the desert.

The city also has many bars and whatnot, but I don't want to get into that because of space restrictions and just in case I ever want to run for U.S. Congress. Mistakes were made. We'll leave it at that.

Because, as the man said, you got to know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, and know when to run. (That man, of course, was a one-third replica of Kenny Rogers.)

A sign of the times in Las Vegas. JOHN MAZEROLLE/FOR METRO

Takes an eagle eye to spot a hoax

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Class project

World fooled by Montreal video

Relax, world — your baby won't get snatched by an eagle if you visit Montreal.

An online video of the massive bird plucking an infant off the ground has been acknowledged by its creators as a fake.

The admission comes after the video, produced by students at a new-media training school in Montreal, was viewed millions of times Wednesday on YouTube and was the subject of news reports in Canada and internationally. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Other pranks

With the Internet in shock over the eagle/toddler hoax, Metro decided to revisit some other online video spoofs of the past.

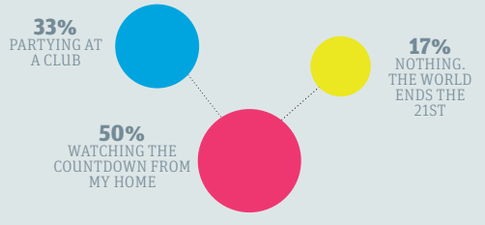
- **Lonelygirl15.** This was an early online video blog depicting the life of a fictional teenager named Bree Avery. The series followed the typical angst-ridden teenager whose confessional videos covered things like her favourite stuffed animals or her first kiss. Over time, the show evolved to include a cult and the mysterious disappearance of Bree's parents. In the fall of 2006, fans of the show discovered that Bree was actually a 19-year-old actress named Jessica Rose, and the show was revealed to be fake.
- **Dating site eHarmony cat lady.** A woman named Debbie tearfully confessed her love of felines in what appeared to be a dating site biography. The site released a statement after admitting it was a hoax.
- **Onion iPod charger.** A video purportedly showed a man charging his iPod using an onion and some Gatorade. It also garnered a lot of press when frustrated Apple enthusiasts plugged their devices into various vegetables.
- **Microsoft 'viral marketing' slip and slide.** A video shows a man rocketing down a giant water slide before flying off a ramp at the end and landing in a small wading pool. The video was created using a stuntman and computer animation, and was eventually revealed to be part of a marketing campaign for Microsoft Office.

Watch these videos and more at metronews.ca.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What will you be doing for New Year's?



Twitter

@SChandraHerbert: .@terrylakemla Year to date stats put out by the BC gov't say tourism growth at1.1%, not 12% as you claim. Where'd you get your #'s?

@JodyClaman: Just preparing the cars for #Whistler! Epic conditions!!! Love the Holidays!! #Food Family, Friends, Frocks... lot of Bubbles and Chocolate!

@pattibacchus: I hope there's an extra nice place in heaven for bus drivers who had to deal with W 10th Ave today. pic.twitter.com/XVCwEoh4

@andreareimer: Got socks? Four new winter shelters full to capacity, donations of socks, towels needed http://fb.me/EoW-9WJ7i

@VancouverPD: Is your car equipped for winter driving conditions? Are you? If not, leave your car at home and take transit! @translink @RoadSafetyBC Thnx

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You think New York City's Times Square has the corner on the NYE market? Think again. There are plenty of good times to be had in Vancouver. GETTY IMAGES

What to do on NYE — if the world doesn't end tomorrow

Apocalypse optimism. Provided we're still around next week, here are some places to sing Auld Lang Syne

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Welcome to my last column before the end of the ... year.

That's right – no Backstage Pass until Jan. 3.

The horror.

Of course, as you know, the earth is scheduled to end tomorrow. And that put me in a bit of a predicament, because I was planning on listing which New Year's Eve events you should consider hitting up this year.

I mean, what's the point of writing this column if we're all going to shake hands with a fiery Mayan apocalypse tomorrow morning?

I'll tell you what the point is: Optimism.

(Cue Hollywood music and Morgan Freeman voice-over in your head.)

Tomorrow morning, you're going to wake up just like every day since you first arrived on this incredible planet.

But this time, it will be different. You're going to do the little things in life that you love to do. Sure, you'll still grab a coffee. Or go to the gym. You might even go to work. Or maybe you're still off work because it snowed a couple centimetres this past Tuesday in Vancouver. It doesn't matter.

The important thing is that today, you're more alive than you've ever been. So tell those Mayans where to go and bring on New Year's Eve, Gregorian calendar.

But don't forget to bring your Visa card.

(End music and Morgan Freeman voiceover.)

Enjoy your holidays, everybody.

NYE 2013 at Telus World of Science: This party claims to be returning to its "ultra unique" location. And who doesn't like an ultra one-of-a-kind location? Two rooms of music, six DJs and 1,100 of your closest friends. Visit Twisted.ca/NYE2013 for your tickets. It will no doubt be an extremely very unique night.

2013 New Year's Ball: This one's at the Fairmont Waterfront and the dress code says you must be well-dressed and manicured. No word on whether manicure-checks will be set up at the door. But you can get your nails spruced up inside, just in case, courtesy of Blingnail.ca. Photos from last year's event look a bit like my grad – although mine was in 1988 so my memory's a bit hazy. Also, I was drunk.

Hotel Georgia New Year's Ball: This one seems to be presented by the same folks who are bringing you the one at the Fairmont Waterfront, above. So all I can say is, clean under your fingernails.

Ceili's New Year's Eve 2013 House Party: It's a house party. In an Irish bar. That used to be a club. You get where I'm going with this. Forty bucks gets you inside and includes "party favours, champagne toast and a midnight snack". Which more or less means $40 gets you inside. Live entertainment from Dance Mob and the Lost Boys. Visit ceilis.com for more info.

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Tarantino Unchained on Django emotions

New movie. Director talks about how he scaled back parts of his new movie despite wanting to take it further than he ended up doing

LIZ BROWN
scene@metronews.ca

Director Quentin Tarantino made a conscious effort to drop some violence from his recent film. HANDOUT

Django Unchained is a movie so brutal, it brought Quentin Tarantino to tears.

In Toronto earlier this month for the Canadian premiere, he recounted how he broke down during an intense scene where a couple of sadistic slave owners whip Broomhilda (played by Kerry Washington), the wife of the film's hero Django.

"I was operating the camera on one of those scenes and (Washington) got to me. The next thing you know I was completely blind because my eyepiece was filling up with tears," he says.

But it was more the context of the brutality than the bloody assault that yanked at Tarantino's emotions.

"That was a rough scene," he admits. "Where we were doing it, when you see that scene, you will see shacks behind her and those were the actual slave quarters where the slaves lived on those plantations. There is blood in that grass and flesh in those trees and we felt the ancestors who once walked there," he says.

Rated R

"I could handle a rougher version of the movie than what exists right now. I have more of a tolerance for it."
Quentin Tarantino

The Django Unchained that audiences will view when it heads to theatres on Dec. 25 is a toned-down version of the film Tarantino originally offered the American ratings juggernaut MPAA.

"They actually gave an R rating to a rougher version than I ultimately ended up presenting to the public," he says.

It was the director himself who made the call to chill on the violence — even though the gore remains trademark Tarantino and there are plenty of scenes that will churn the stomachs of the strongest viewers.

"I could handle a rougher version of the movie than what exists right now. I have more of a tolerance for it, but I kind of realized that when I watched that version of the movie with audiences, that I was traumatizing them too much. It's just that f—king simple. And I want people to enjoy the movie at the very end of it."

Clocking in at just under three hours, there's plenty to enjoy in Tarantino's take on the spaghetti western and his homage to Italian director Sergio Corbucci, the man behind the original Django. The film follows Django (Jamie Foxx), a slave-turned-bounty hunter on his quest to free his wife from the evil plantation owner Calvin Candie (Leonardo DiCaprio).

Set in the pre-Civil War South, Tarantino peppers his dialogue with the N word, substitutes literary references for his typical pop culture banter and offers his heroes lots of moral grey areas in which to roam.

"I wasn't so much trying to get a message across (about slavery) as paint a very realistic picture of what America was like at that time and create a world where slavery is the norm," he says.

"Rather than make some soapbox speeches about it, or make points against America, I just wanted to ... take you back to that time and stick you in the middle of it."

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No height minimums to ride for Tom

Vertically challenged. The best-selling thrill writer, Jim Grant, is just fine with Tom Cruise taking on his beloved character Jack Reacher

DOROTHY ROBINSON
Metro World News

Stand tall Tom, you can still Cruise on this thrill ride. HANDOUT

Tom Cruise is one of the biggest movie stars in the entire world.

If he wants to take your book and turn it into a movie — as well as cast himself as the star — it's a gift from the gods. He has the money, power, and clout to make anything happen. But the one thing Cruise doesn't have?

Height.

Which is a big problem when you're supposed to be portraying Jack Reacher, the epically popular character of the Lee Child novels, who is written as six-foot-five with ice-blue eyes, dirty blond hair and tipping the scales at 240 pounds.

That does not one Tom Cruise make.

"A lot of the book fans were so upset that they weren't going to get a facsimile of Reacher on the screen," says Jim Grant at a recent press conference to promote the new film, Jack Reacher, which is based off his ninth Reacher novel, One Shot. (Lee Child is his pen name.)

"Tom Cruise isn't a big guy, sure, but portraying the inside of Reacher was so much more important," Grant said in his English lilt.

"It comes down to talent, of which there are a very limited number of people who have that level of talent and technique."

The uproar that someone who is five foot seven was tapped to play Reacher — a character who has helped to sell 60 million copies of books — reached Twilight-message-board levels of hysteria.

Grant noted that while he's happy his fans care so much, they have to understand that there aren't really any actors out there that size — a fact he knows first hand.

"In 100 years, we haven't had an actor of that size. The camera can't deal with that large of a physicality," he says.

"People said, 'What about Hugh Jackman?' Well, I was just on a plane with Hugh Jackman, and he's smaller than me and I'm smaller than Reacher. It just won't happen."

Child has published seventeen Jack Reacher novels — the 18th is out next year — and he promises that what he's seen on the screen won't influence what he writes on the page (meaning Reacher won't magically shrink and become a brunette).

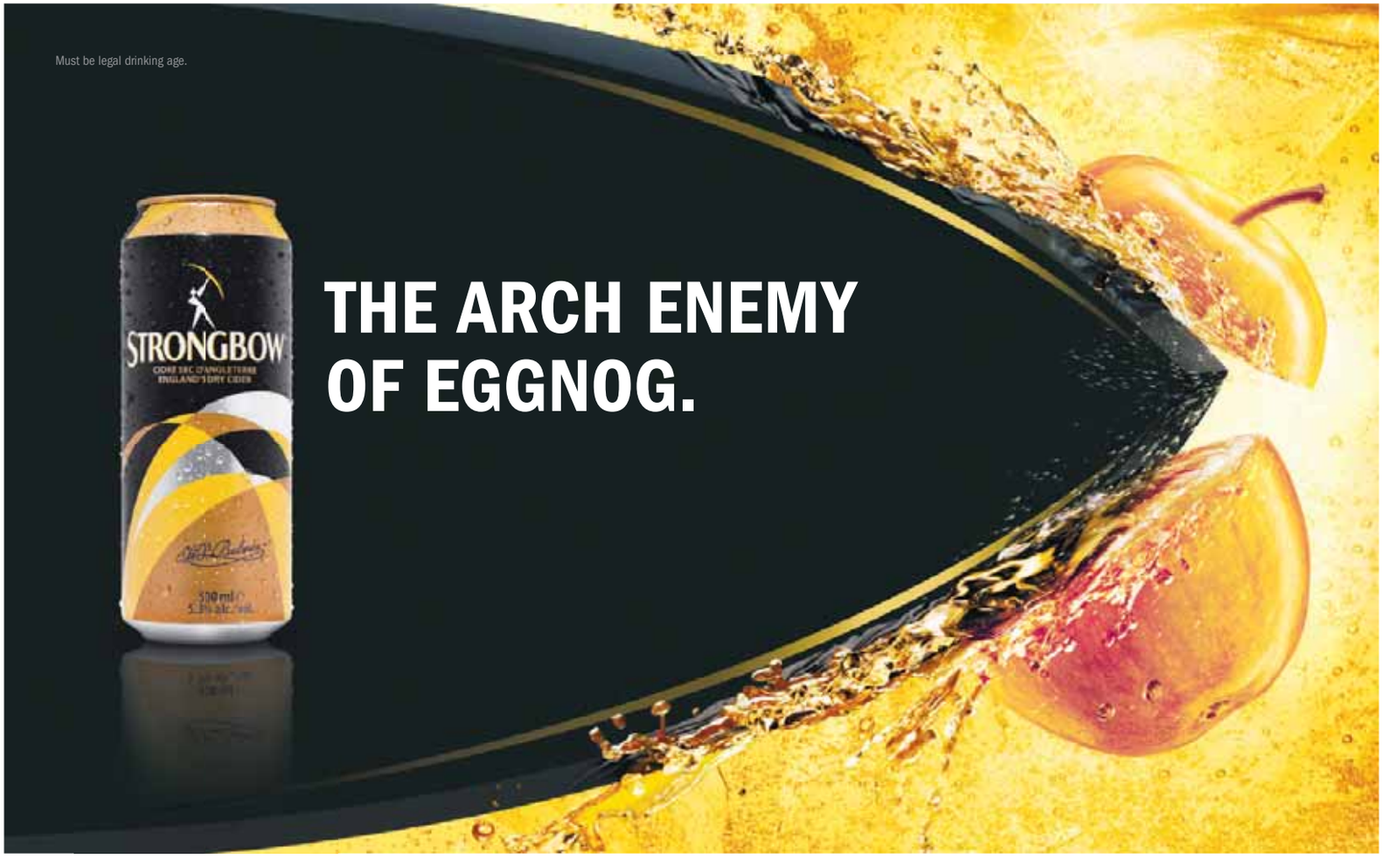
"I've seen that happen, but don't worry, I've got 17 books out before the movie, soon to be 18," he notes.

"The character is so secure, nothing will replace him. To me, it's very clear in my own head that the characters in the books and movies are related, but one doesn't replace the other. The movie doesn't cancel the books or vice versa."

Quoted

"It was not really a political response, it was a human response. No one feels like going out and partying on a Saturday."

Child on postponing the U.S. Pittsburgh premiere following the deadly Connecticut school shooting.



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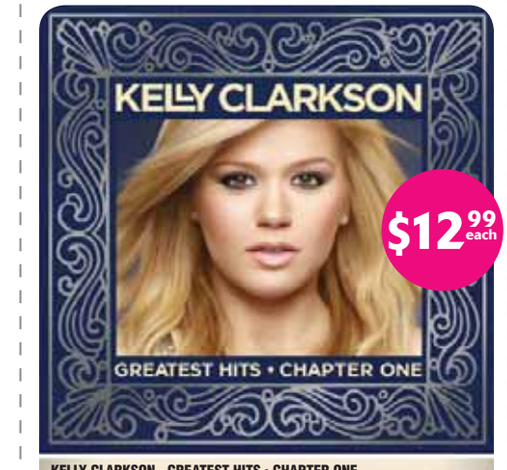

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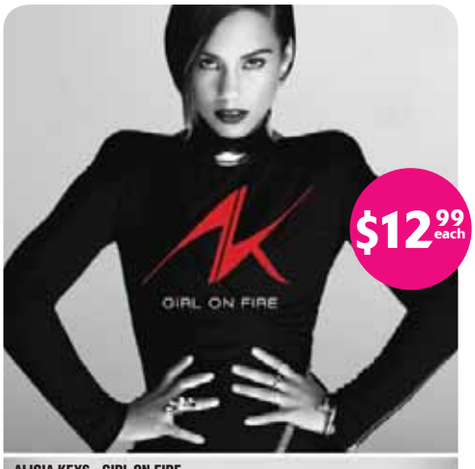

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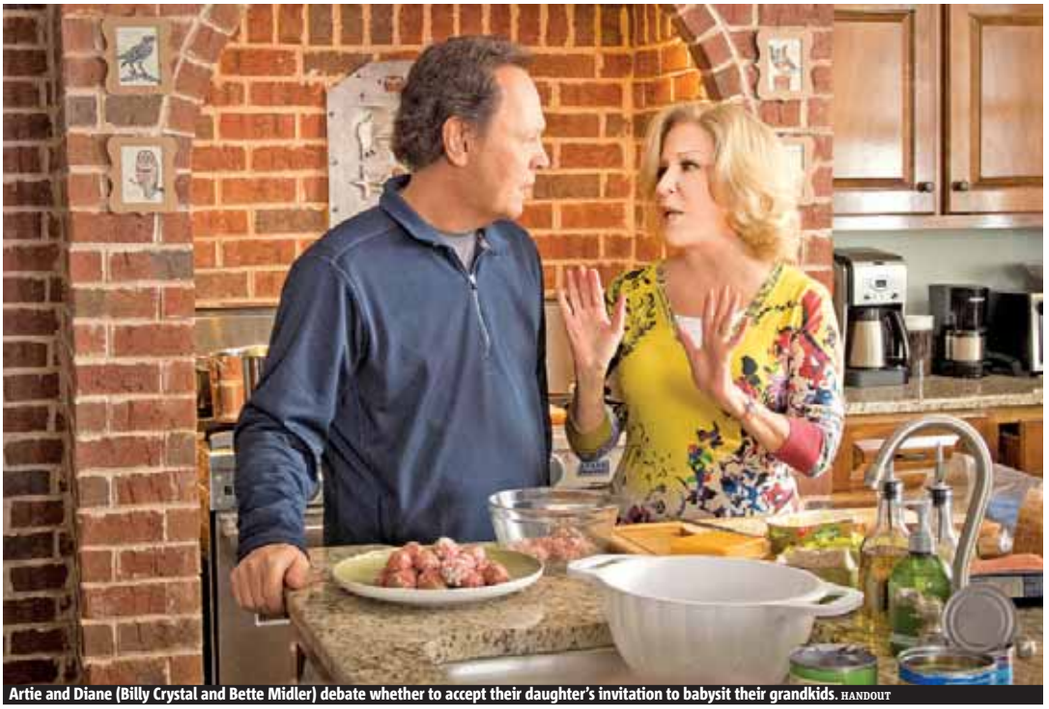
Billy Crystal dispenses some Parental Guidance

New movie. Actor talks about how grateful he is for a long career and marriage — he met his wife at 18

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News



Artie and Diane (Billy Crystal and Bette Midler) debate whether to accept their daughter's invitation to babysit their grandkids. HANDOUT

An early scene in Parental Guidance finds Billy Crystal's baseball announcer Artie Decker confused by a barrage of Twitter and Facebook-related terms lobbed at him by his boss.

While Crystal himself has become an avid and adept user of Twitter, he does share some of his character's misgivings about technology.

Pulling out his iPhone, he says, "The thing about these things — and I just got one — as a parent and a grandparent you can get called when things happen. But I hate seeing families in restaurants and they're all (looking at their phones.) They text the waiter what they want. They look so sad. The art of conversation is gone."

That condition extends beyond the family dinner hour, Crystal warns.

"What kills me also is people walking around town looking down at their phone assuming everyone else is going to stop and get out of the way," he says. "We have a world looking down."

That early scene, by the way, ends with Artie getting fired at age 58 after being a minor league baseball announcer for decades, always dreaming of calling major league games for the San Francisco Giants. Luckily, 64-year-old Crystal hasn't had to see any dreams go unfulfilled himself.

"I'm shocked I've done as many things as I've done," he says. "I'm so grateful for having a long career. And I hope it gets longer. I don't take anything for granted. I'm so fortunate and lucky in my life. I met somebody who I fell in love with when I was 18. I've been married 43 years. I have two great kids, four grandchildren and another on the way. This was a dream of mine to get made and we wrestled it to the ground and got it made. If I stop now, every dream I've ever had is great. I just keep dreaming."

Quoted

"I hate seeing families in restaurants and they're all (looking at their phones) ... The art of conversation is gone."

Billy Crystal
Star of Parental Guidance

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The 24-year-old singer Adele continues to collect year-end awards. JONATHAN SHORT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

She's still rolling: Adele voted as AP Entertainer of the Year

Banner year. Singer finishes out 2012 with another award, beating out PSY, Twilight cast, Taylor Swift and author E.L. James

Though Adele didn't have a new album or a worldwide tour in 2012, she's still rolling. After a year of Grammy glory and James Bond soundtracking, Adele has been voted The Associated Press Entertainer of the Year.

In 132 ballots submitted by members and subscribers of the AP, Adele easily outpaced other vote-getters like Taylor Swift, Fifty Shades of Grey author E.L. James, the South Korean viral video star PSY and the cast of Twilight.

Editors and broadcasters were asked to cast their ballot for the person who had the most influence on entertainment and culture in 2012.

Adele's year began in triumph at the Grammys, took a turn through recording the theme to the 007 film Skyfall and ended with the birth of her son in October.

The ubiquitous Adele was that rare thing in pop culture — an unqualified sensation, a megastar in a universe of niche hits.

By the end of the year, her sophomore album, 21, had passed 10 million copies sold in the U.S., only the 21st album in the Nielsen SoundScan era (begun in 1991) to achieve diamond status. Buoyed by hits like Someone Like You and Rolling in the Deep long after its release in early 2011, 21 was also the top-selling album on iTunes for the second year running.

As David Panian, news editor for Michigan's Daily Telegram, put it: "It just seemed like you couldn't turn on the radio without hearing one of her songs."

Women have had a lock on the annual Entertainer of the Year selection. Previous winners include Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift, Betty White and Tina Fey. Stephen Colbert is the lone male winner in the six-year history of voting.

The Grammy Awards in February were essentially the de facto crowning of the 24-year-old Adele, whose real name is Adele Adkins, as a pop queen. She won six awards, including album of the year.

It was also a comeback of sorts for Adele, who performed for the first time since having vocal cord surgery, drawing a standing ovation from the Staples Center crowd.

Accepting the album of the year award, a teary Adele exclaimed: "Mum, girl did good!" The emotional, sniffling singer endeared many viewers to her when she copped in her acceptance speech to having "a bit of snot."

"This record is inspired by something that is really normal and everyone's been through it, just a rubbish relationship," said Adele.

But her luck in love has since turned, thanks to her boyfriend Simon Konecki. In an interview with Vogue magazine, Adele said she was through with breakup records and done being "a bitter witch."

When Adele announced in June that she was having a baby with Konecki, her website promptly crashed under the heavy traffic. Their son was born in October.

With such an avalanche of success and now a mother of a newborn son, Adele has understandably taken a step out of the spotlight.

One notable exception was recording the opening credits theme song to Skyfall. The song was recorded with her 21 producer Paul Epworth at the Abbey Road Studios in London with a 77-piece orchestra. Within hours, it zoomed to the top of digital charts.

"There was an overwhelming embrace of Adele and her music," said Joe Butkiewicz, executive editor of the Times Leader in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. "And that was never more evident to me than when I heard teenagers express their enthusiastic expectations for the new James Bond movie because Adele performed the theme song."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"There was an overwhelming embrace of Adele and her music. And that was never more evident to me than when I heard teenagers express their enthusiastic expectations for the new James Bond movie because Adele performed the theme song."

Joe Butkiewicz

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Kristen Stewart ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

K-Stew's sorry for her cheatin' heart

Kristen Stewart knows she's upset more than a few fans over the course of her Twilight tenure — especially since her summer cheating scandal. "I apologize to everyone for making them so angry. It was not my intention," the actress tells Newsweek. "It's not a terrible thing if you're either loved or hated. But honestly, I don't care because it doesn't keep me from doing my s—." And as for the hugely successful vampire franchise coming to an end? "The only relief when it comes to Twilight is that the story is done," she admits.

Angelina Jolie

Angelina Jolie dusts off her director's hat

Angelina Jolie is set to return to the director's chair, choosing to adapt Laura Hillenbrand's Second World War survival story, Unbroken, as her second film, according to E! News. The story follows Louis Zamperini, an air force pilot who survived a crash and spent most of the war in a Japanese prison camp. "I read Laura Hillenbrand's brilliant book and I was so moved by Louis Zamperini's heroic story, I immediately began to fight for the opportunity to make this film," Jolie says. Her directorial debut, In the Land of Blood and Honey, focused on the Bosnian war.

The Word

The year of the lost locks — femmes who took it all off

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

No more long locks for these ladies. Whether it was for a role of a lifetime or to bring awareness to a cause, here are some haircuts that turned heads this year.

Who: Anne Hathaway
Why: The actress had to shave her head for her role as the prostitute Fantine in Les Misérables.
Current length: Short. "I love the short-haired lifestyle," Hathaway says in the December issue of Vogue. "I'm turning 30, and — I hope this isn't obnoxious to say — I feel prettier, and much more myself. I guess I just feel much more satisfied with less now."

Who: Charlize Theron
Why: Theron's shaved head is courtesy of her latest film role, Mad Max: Fury Road.
Current length: Still shaved.

Who: Kellie Pickler
Why: The American Idol singer got a buzz cut to support her best friend, Summer Miller, who had to undergo chemotherapy while being treated for breast cancer.
Current length: Growing out a tad. "We made a pact from the get-go that we would shave our heads together," Pickler told E! Online about sharing the look with her best pal. "And we did."

Who: Miley Cyrus
Why: Who knows. Probably because she's aching to be seen as more "edgy" than her Disney roots.
Current length: It's not so much talking about length as it is talking about the crazy. As she wrote on Twitter when she originally lost the locks, "Never felt more me in my whole life."

Kate Middleton

Kate Middleton determined to make the Royal Christmas

Despite her recent pregnancy-related hospitalization, Kate Middleton is vowing to put on a brave face for the Royal Family's Christmas dinner, according to Radar Online. "Kate doesn't want to disappoint the Queen, nor does she want to skip on her duties," a source says.

"She feels she is obliged to appear at the annual Christmas dinner and doesn't want to let anyone down." Her husband, though, is offering an out. "William has his concerns though that she won't be up to it, and told Kate she shouldn't worry if she feels too sick to attend and that no one will judge her negatively," the source adds. "But Kate isn't having it and is determined to be at the dinner, smiling as always."

Twitter

@JLo
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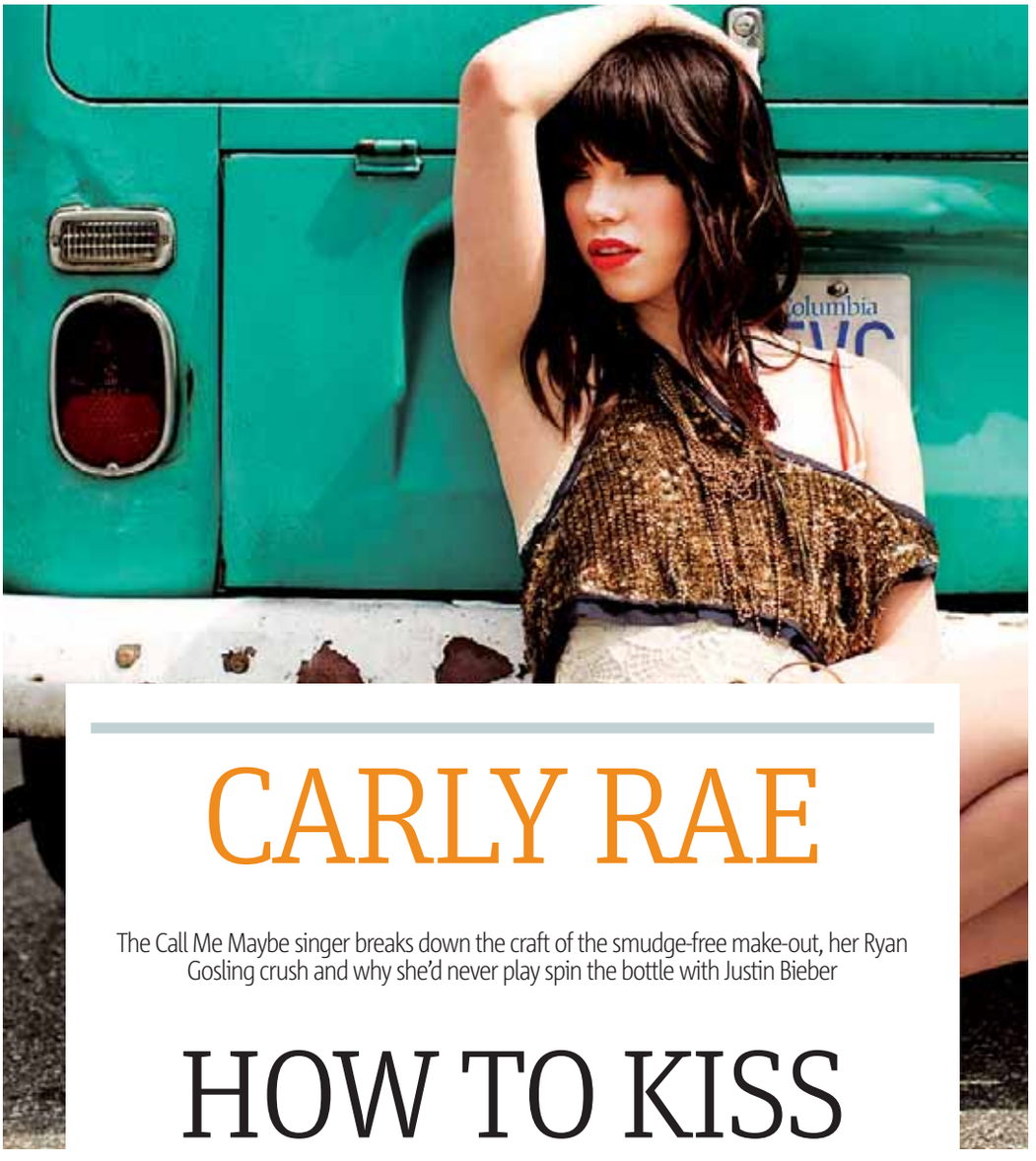


CARLY RAE HOW TO KISS

The Call Me Maybe singer breaks down the craft of the smudge-free make-out, her Ryan Gosling crush and why she'd never play spin the bottle with Justin Bieber

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

As she promotes her new album, Kiss, we asked Carly Rae Jepsen about makeup application and the art of making out, because we figured she must be an expert at it by now.

Putting the makeup on...
"For a press event, I need one hour for my hair and makeup. But if it's just for me, I literally need 10 minutes. My grooming process has become shorter and shorter in my off-days. I like getting glammed up for the red carpet, but then being able to wear no makeup and be in flannel for a camping weekend. I'm like, 'Take me as I am.'"

The spin the bottle test. Ryan Gosling — yay or nay?
"I've always had a thing for Ryan Gosling. I don't think I'm alone in that! There's not one movie of his that I haven't liked. It's his personality. I've never met him, but the characters he plays are very charming."

And Justin Bieber?
"He's my friend, that would be too strange. We would never play that game together!"

On making out
"I've always had fairly pleasant experiences, but not, like, a lot of them! Kissing is all about how you feel about the person. If you have no chemistry, it can be totally meaningless. But if you have the right amount of flare, then it can be a really magical moment. I don't know if I'm a good kisser. I hope so."

Video

Watch Carly Rae Jepsen give a tutorial on how to kiss without smudging your lipstick on metronews.ca

Holiday party skin savers

These are two products to turn to when the party starts showing up on your face

KENYA HUNT
life@metronews.ca

La Prairie Advanced Marine Biology Day Cream SPF 20

$135, laprairie.com.
Grab this potent face cream to recover from all of that dehydrating holiday drinking.

Lancôme Visionnaire Advanced Skin Corrector

$60, lancome.com.
This is the serum to fill out those forehead creases that pop up after too many nights spent squinting in dark clubs.

Inside her makeup bag

Carly Rae Jepsen opens up her purse to show us the products she can't get through the day without

MAC Lipstick in Lady Danger

"I'm obsessed with this. It's a statement piece. It's kind of like an orangey red, but the perfect shade of it. It's a good pick-me-up if you have to get dolled up fast."

Marc Jacobs Daisy Eau de Parfum

"I'm really picky with scents. I can get sick of them after a day or two. Daisy has been one that I've really hung on to. It's not too domineering, really pleasant and kind of subtle. It feels really fresh every time I spray it on."

MAC Eye Kohl in Teddy, Giorgio Armani mascara and Maestro Fusion foundation

"If I'm doing my own makeup, and it's not for press, these are the three things I always use."

Is this the last supper?

A bite of Belize. This country was once home to the ancient Mayans, who are said to have predicted the end of the world on Dec. 21. If that's the case, go out with a full stomach

"Cochinita (small pig) pibil (to bury) literally translates to 'buried whole suckling pig,'" write the editors of Flavors of Belize magazine in their book of the same name about this recipe.

"Traditionally, you should marinate the pork in the same manner but cook the whole pig wrapped in banana leaves underground with fire wood and hot stones for hours until tender."

This recipe by Chef Sean Kuylen can also be cooked in a slow cooker, on low for 12 hours or on high for six hours.

Ingredients

- 5 lbs pork shoulder or pork leg, bone in
- 1 head garlic
- 1 1/2 tbsp salt
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1 1/2 tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp red recado, diluted to form paste
- 1/2 cup sour orange juice
- Smoked banana leaves
- 2 medium onions, quartered
- 2 medium green bell peppers, quartered
- 1/4 cup cilantro, minced

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Pierce pork with knife and insert garlic cloves all around.

2. Mix all dry ingredients; combine with recado, diluted in orange juice and coat pork. Marinate overnight.

3. Place pork in large roasting pan lined with banana leaves. Add onion, sweet pepper and place cilantro on top. Pour remaining marinade liquid and add more water to pan to approximately 1 inch high. Cover with banana leaves and seal tightly with foil.

4. Bake for 5 hours or until meat is very tender and starts to release from the bone. Shred pork and serve on warm corn tortillas topped with pickled red onions or habanero salsa.

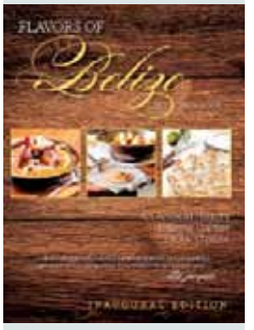
Pureco Cochinita Pibil

This recipe serves eight. MATT ARMENDARIZ FOR FLAVORS OF BELIZE: THE COOKBOOK

ALL RECIPES ON THIS PAGE FROM FLAVORS OF BELIZE: THE COOKBOOK (MCNAB PUBLISHING LTD)

Cookbook of the Week

Dine like the Mayans



Published by McNab Publishing Ltd., Flavors of Belize includes a selection of soups and starters, main dishes and delectable desserts. Additionally, this cookbook hosts a variety of submissions from some of Belize's most renowned chefs and cooks. Each section opens with a brief explanation of the different cultures, whose history acts as the foundation of Belizean heritage. This colourful gastronomic guide delivers more than 120 recipes spanning cultures including the Maya, British, Mestizo, Creole, Chinese, Lebanese, Garifuna and more.

Dukunu. In ancient Mayan culture, corn was considered a gift from gods

"In ancient Maya culture, corn represented much more than a grain used for food," write the editors of Flavors of Belize magazine in their cookbook.

"Corn was also considered a gift from the gods and cultivating it was a sacred duty. In fact, according to the sacred book of the Maya, (Popol Vuh), the gods created humans from corn."

Ingredients

- 10 to 12 green corn on the cob, shucked
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup coconut milk
- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp sugar
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. Peel corn, reserving clean husks. Purée corn with water in a blender. Pour into a large mixing bowl and mix with the remaining ingredients.

2. Place 1/4 to 1/3 cup mixture onto the centre of each reserved husk. Bring sides together, making sure to overlap and fold pointed end upward. Secure each with string.

Cooked pork can be added after placing the mixture in corn husk. MATT ARMENDARIZ FOR FLAVORS OF BELIZE: THE COOKBOOK

3. Place 2 to 3 inches of water in sauce pot, bring to a boil and arrange dukunu folded side down. Boil for about 1/2 hour. Remove from husk and serve.

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Classic gifts for the pickiest decorator

Imagine having the task of buying a Christmas present for someone who not only has it all, but seemingly has great taste and knows what they like. That's what my family and friends run up against every Christmas — trying to buy me something I don't already have or will like enough to have in my home. Truth be told, designers are probably the simplest to buy for, as long as you don't give short-lived trend items. By keeping the choices classic and useful, your gift will be a hit with your favourite design aficionado. Here's a few that topped my wish list this holiday season. Some cost as little as a dollar and some hundreds. I'd love all of them under my tree this year, Mr. Santa...

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

The fuzzy feeling

Whether it be real or faux, a fur throw slung over a chair or end of the bed has always made a luxurious statement in the home. From year to year the fur colours change (this year it's pale browns and greys), and there is always an animal print in fashion. Take a cue from designer Brian Gluckstein and his collection of throws (with a handsome leather carry handle) and live like a designer. Faux Fur Throw, $149, thebay.com.

Clink, clink on the cheap

Nothing breaks the mood of a fancy party than having to use the wrong glass when toasting a celebration. And trust me, using a wine glass to serve champagne does not impress anyone who is style conscious. I like to stock up on glass ones and have plenty of them. My go-to store is the Dollarama. Glass Champagne Flutes, $1, dollarama.com.

A simple touch

A decorative box can sit handsomely on a front foyer table to hold keys, coins and cards, or on a dresser to hold jewelry, pens and keepsakes in the bedroom. The Agresti Gold Leaf Box adds simple lines and a subtle gold shine to decorate any table or dresser top. $795, birks.com.

Crystal accent

The classic round shape of the rose bowl (or goldfish bowl, as it's commonly called) is perfect for flowers. Three rose bowls in a row creates a modern appeal down the centre of a dining table or on a mantel. Tiffany's Floral Vine Rose Bowl holds a dozen red roses, a candle and more, $330, tiffany.ca.

Light it up

There is no decorator out there that doesn't like candles, and even better are a collection of candles on a tray. It's the perfect centrepiece on a dining table, coffee table or in the bath. Inexpensive candles mean filling the tray without breaking the bank. Glade Winter Collection Candles, $5.50 each, glade.ca.

Charger chic

Decorate the simplest of china by adding a layer of silver underneath. Charger plates create instant shimmer and luxury to a dinner party table. Add cool silver shine and the natural imprint of woodgrain with charger plates from President's Choice, $10 for 4. loblaws.ca.

A festive feast with a small ecological footprint?

Can my festive holiday feast also have a small footprint?

QUEEN OF GREEN
Tovah Paglaro
green@metronews.ca

The holiday season is about family, community, celebration … and food! Delicious food. The most festive of holiday feasts are both delicious and sustainable — a joyous combination that's within everybody's reach. And while that perfect balance is something of considerable debate, a few simple steps will elevate your table to one worthy of the love you bear for friends and family.

Step #1: Waste not, want not

Canadians produce an estimated $27 billion in food waste every year, and half of that is household food. That's not festive! Cook an appropriate amount of food for the size of your gathering, and plan for the leftovers.

Step #2: Cook from scratch

The closer you start to raw ingredients, the more nutritious and the more sustainable your meal is likely to be. Before you reach for the BPA-lined can of cranberry sauce or the packet of gravy mix, ask yourself, "Can I make this from scratch?" The answer is a resounding yes.

Step #3: Buy local and organic

Organic food does cost more. That's because it's more expensive to produce than conventional alternatives, which we often subsidize with environmental sacrifice and long-term health costs. But since you're now committed to not wasting any food, and to cooking from scratch, you're going to save so much money you can probably offset the cost of buying more sustainable options.

Step #4: Avoid serving GMO

Unlike most of Europe, Canada does not require labelling of foods containing genetically modified ingredients. Certified organic foods cannot, by definition, contain GMO ingredients. Outside of those parameters, buy carefully. The good news for your holiday feast is that there are no GMO varieties of wheat, potatoes or root vegetables on the market. However, beware of conventional canola oil or soy derivatives.

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HOLIDAY 2012 gift guide

Tap into these tech gifts

Buzz about smartphones

iPhone 5 — $699 and up (without contract).

Samsung Galaxy Note 2 — $729 (without contract).

MIKE YAWNEY
For Metro

With processors and features that rival small computers, it's no wonder smartphones have quickly become the high tech gift for the holidays. There are many smartphones to choose from, but which one is right for your loved one? Take a look at our picks to find the perfect one.

iPhone 5 — $699 and up (without contract)
Featuring an all new design, Apple's latest smartphone is sure to turn heads. The diamond-cut bevelled edges not only look beautiful, they take away the rough edges, giving it an elegant feel. This is the first iPhone to feature LTE, which means you can take advantage of the latest high-speed wireless networks. The Retina display has also been made slightly larger so you get more usable workspace on the screen.

Samsung Galaxy Note 2 — $729 (without contract)
An ideal smartphone for those in marketing, advertising or someone with a creative flair. Often referred to as a smartphone/tablet hybrid, the Note II features a large 5.5-inch screen that can be navigated through touch or a special stylus known as an S Pen. Users can use the pen to sketch or draw on maps, photos or blueprints. The blazing quad-core processor gives this phone performance like no other.

Nokia Lumia 920 — $549.99 (without contract)
The most advanced Windows phone to date. Sporting wireless charging and a touchscreen so sensitive you can use it while wearing gloves, the Nokia 920 is sure to be a popular phone this holiday. The 8.7-megapixel camera also shoots surprisingly well in low light conditions.

LG Optimus G — $599 (without contract)
This smartphone has received the title of "Canada's fastest smartphone." Not only is it the first handset to feature Qualcomm's lightning-quick quad-core processor, it's also the first phone to support the 2,600 MHz spectrum, which is the fastest LTE network in the country. The Optimus G also features a voice-activated camera that will snap photos whenever someone says the word "cheese."

Sony Xperia T — $549 (no contract, price may vary)
Known simply as "The Bond Phone," the Xperia T is the same smartphone used by 007 himself in Skyfall. This handset features a 13-megapixel camera and is Playstation certified, which is perfect for those who enjoy gaming on the go. Music and photos can easily be shared by bringing this smartphone close to other NFC-enabled devices.

Mophie Powerstation Pro — $99
Smartphones are simply paperweights without a fully charged battery. Fortunately, this device will ensure your battery lasts all day and then some. The Powerstation Pro holds enough juice to recharge your smartphone up to four times. It's lightweight, rugged, dustproof and waterproof so it's perfect for those constantly on the go.

Ballistic Cases — various prices
You spent a fortune on your new smartphone, so why not protect your investment. Ballistic cases are designed to do just that. Ballistic cases have been tested to withstand drops, being run over by vehicles, and Fido's canine teeth. Note: Not a good idea to let your dog use your smartphone as a chew toy.

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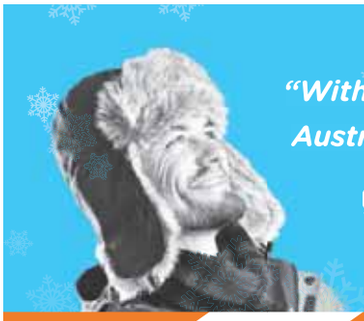

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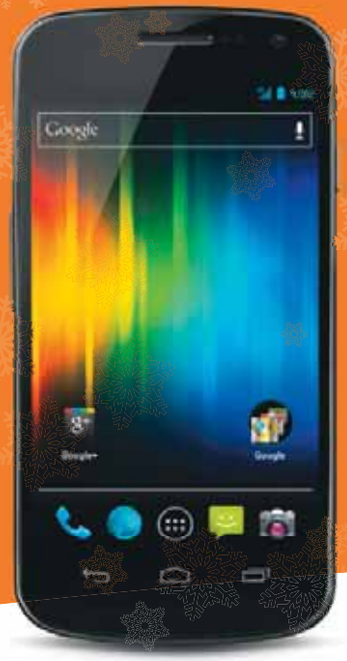

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Challenge yourself this year by finding different ways to gift wrap your Christmast presents. JUPITERIMAGES/COMSTOCK/THINKSTOCK

Get crafty with gift wrapping

SARAH GUNN
YummyMummyClub.ca

Wrapping presents is one of my favourite things to do this time of year. I love the patterns of paper, the ribbons and the bows.

This year, though, I wanted to get a little crafty with my Christmas wrapping so I challenged myself to come up with three different ways to use brown paper.

I discovered that brown paper packages don't just have to be tied up with string — they can be decorated with almost anything. (Yes, The Sound of Music is my favourite movie of all time).

I mostly used things around the house, but if you don't have a basement full of craft supplies, you can get everything you need at any craft store.

Use craft paint to create a holiday theme. YUMMY MUMMY PHOTO

Try ribbon, scrapbook paper and stickers for decoration. YUMMY MUMMY PHOTO

Wrap your package in a band of felt and add details. YUMMY MUMMY PHOTO

- Paint your packages in a holiday theme using craft paint.
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Recipe. Mulled Cider Shortbread Bars

Try these delicious cider shortbread bars for guests or the family during the holidays.

Ingredients:

Crust:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup cold Gay Lea Unsalted Butter, cut into cubes
- ½ cup instant dissolving sugar
- ½ tsp salt

Filling:

- 6 egg yolks
- 2 cups instant dissolving sugar
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups apple cider
- 2 tsp finely grated orange zest
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tbsp icing sugar

Instructions:

1 Crust: Preheat the oven to 350 F (180 C). Combine the flour, butter, sugar and salt in a food processor; pulse until crumbly. Firmly press the dough into a 9x13-inch baking pan lined with foil. Bake for 25 minutes or until pale golden around the edges.

2 Filling: Meanwhile, whisk the egg yolks with the sugar and flour until a very thick paste forms. Whisk in the apple cider, orange zest, cinnamon, baking powder and nutmeg until smooth.

3 Reduce the oven temperature to 300 F (150 C). Pour the egg mixture over the hot crust. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until just set. Cool to room temperature. Chill for at least 4 hours or until firm. Dust the top with the icing sugar and slice into bars. Makes 32 bars

Tips:

1 Make-ahead: Transfer the bars to an airtight container and store, in the refrigerator, for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 1 month.

2 Ingredient source: If apple cider isn't available at the supermarket, use any cold-pressed apple juice.

RECIPE COURTESY GAY LEA FOODS CO-OPERATIVE LTD.

These Mulled Cider Shortbread Bars can be made in advance and stored in the refrigerator for four days. GAY LEA PHOTO

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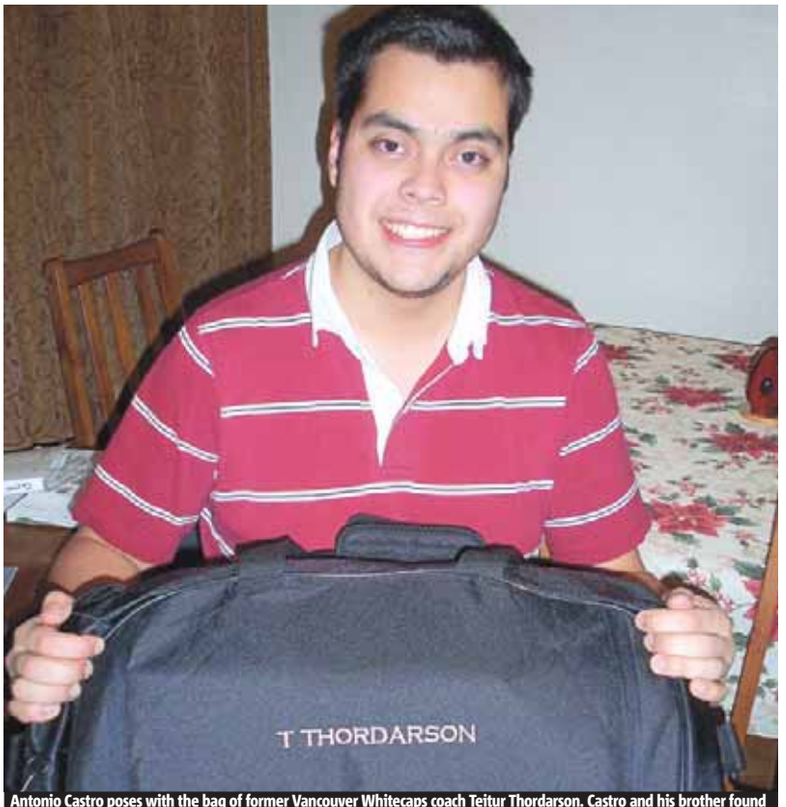
LEGENDARY PICTURES DC COMICS SYNCOPY

Whitecaps fans bag a 'bizarre find'

MLS. Brothers find and purchase bag of former head coach Teitur Thordarson at a Vancouver Whitecaps warehouse sale

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca



Antonio Castro poses with the bag of former Vancouver Whitecaps coach Teitur Thordarson. Castro and his brother found and purchased the bag at the MLS club's warehouse sale earlier this month. CONTRIBUTED/ANTONIO CASTRO

What to do with a toothbrush believed to have once been used by former Vancouver Whitecaps head coach Teitur Thordarson?

That's the dilemma facing Antonio Castro and his brother, both avid Whitecaps fans, after the siblings came across and purchased Thordarson's old team bag during the Major League Soccer club's warehouse sale earlier this month.

The items inside the bag included the aforementioned toothbrush, deodorant, body lotion, toothpaste and some aftershave, said Castro.

"I'm fairly certain we don't have a use for the toothbrush," he said, adding some of those items may find their way into the trash.

There were also some eight pairs of shorts, 10 T-shirts and track pants, as well as jackets, all size extra large.

The total cost of the find was $40. Not a bad Christmas gift, and at a reasonable price.

"Honestly, I had no idea what to expect when we opened it up," said Castro. "It was a bizarre find."

Bizarre because Thordarson hasn't been with the Whitecaps since he was fired in May 2011, a little more than two months after he made his MLS head coaching debut with an emphatic and entertaining 4-2 win over Toronto FC at the temporary Empire Field.

The Whitecaps struggled after that, losing five of their next 11 matches and going winless in that span.

Thordarson joined Vancouver in 2008, prior to the club gaining entry into MLS.

"I thought it (the bag) was out by mistake," said Castro.

"I didn't even think it was meant to be out on the floor. I figured it was a mistake and ignored it and moved on to check out other items at the sale.

"My brother asked one of the Whitecaps staff and they said, 'Yeah, it's $40 for the entire bag.' So he jumped on that one."

Quoted

"I didn't even think it was meant to be out on the floor. I figured it was a mistake and ignored it and moved on to check out other items at the sale."
Whitecaps fan Antonio Castro

CFL

Eskimos extend Sherritt's contract

The Edmonton Eskimos will head into next season with the cornerstone of their defence locked up.

The Eskimos have signed reigning CFL defensive player of the year JC Sherritt to a contract extension through the 2015 season, the club announced Wednesday.

Sherritt made a record-setting 130 defensive tackles in 2012. He also recorded three sacks, three special-teams tackles, three forced fumbles, one fumble recovery, two knockdowns and five interceptions for 56 yards.

He earned 49 of the 57 votes cast by CFL coaches and members of the Football Reporters of Canada to win the defensive player of the year award.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Argos release safety Boulay

The off-season house cleaning continues for the Toronto Argonauts.

The Argonauts released veteran safety Etienne Boulay on Wednesday, one day after cutting loose veteran kicker/punter Noel Prefontaine.

Boulay, a Montreal native, joined the Argos in the off-season and started 13 regular-season games for the club, registering five special-teams tackles.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Etienne Boulay
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canucks' AHL affiliate shuts out Heat

Chicago Wolves forward Brett Sterling battles Abbotsford Heat defenceman T.J. Brodie for a loose puck during Wednesday's American Hockey League game in Chicago. ROSS DETTMAN/CHICAGO WOLVES

The Chicago Wolves, the American Hockey League affiliates of the Vancouver Canucks, are now trending in a winning direction.

Their rivals from the Fraser Valley, the Abbotsford Heat, are going in the opposite direction.

The two clubs met Wednesday in a morning affair in Chicago, with the Wolves hanging on for a 1-0 victory to extend their winning streak to four games.

Darren Haydar scored the lone goal of the game just past the midway point of the first period.

Matt Climie stopped all 27 shots he faced for the shutout. At the other end, Heat goalie Barry Brust made 34 saves in a losing cause.

The Wolves have now won five of their last six games. Meanwhile, the Heat, still atop the Western Conference with a 15-6-3-3 record, have now won only twice in their last eight games.

Scoring has to be a main issue of concern for the Abbotsford club, which is the affiliate of the Calgary Flames.

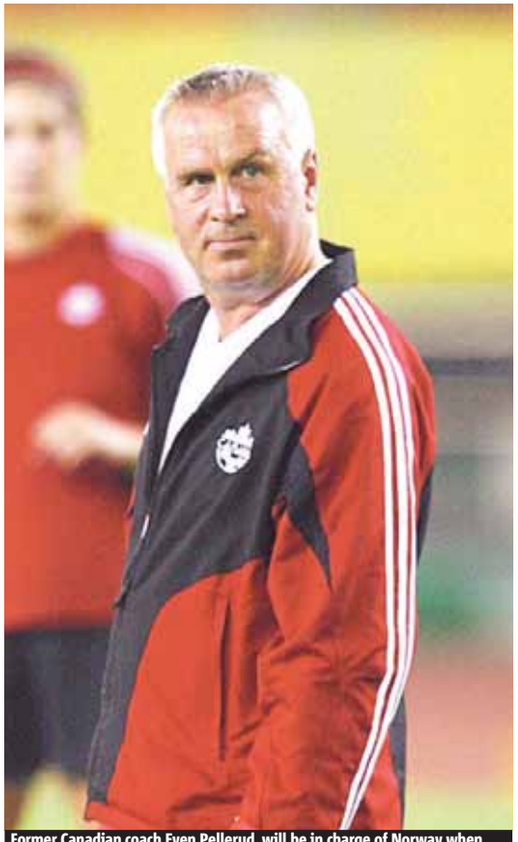
The Heat have scored just 10 times during this recent eight-game stretch and have been shut out in three of those contests.

The Heat play the Grand Rapids Griffins Friday and the Rockford IceHogs the next night, which will conclude their regular-season schedule before the seven-day Christmas break.

The Wolves, now atop the Midwest Division and third in the Western Conference, will close out their portion of the schedule before the break with a Saturday night game against the Griffins.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

Norway women's soccer team looks to get Even against Canada



Former Canadian coach Even Pellerud will be in charge of Norway when it faces our national team at the Four Nations women's soccer tournament in China next month. KIN CHEUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Four Nations. Pellerud looks to rekindle his homeland's lost glory at upcoming tournament

When Canada plays Norway at the Four Nations women's soccer tournament in China next month, a familiar face will be standing in front of the opposition bench.

Former Canadian national team coach Even Pellerud is back at the Norway helm, as of Jan. 1.

"I told my daughters the other day I will be playing against a team whose players I know much better than my own (Norwegian) players," he said.

The other teams at the Jan. 10-17 Four Nations are host China and host South Korea.

Norwegian football officials had been talking to Pellerud about another position like technical director, but he was appointed coach after a staff reorganization

Norway has had mixed results in recent years, failing to qualify for the London Olympics and exiting after the first round of the 2011 Women's World Cup. Norway is currently ranked 12th in the world, to Canada's seventh.

"Norway used to be top-ranked and there has been a slide down ever since.... There is a desire to come back — inside the women's program, in the Norwegian Football Federation," said Pellerud.

Under Pellerud's guidance, the Norwegian women won the 1993 European championship, the 1995 World Cup and a bronze at the '96 Olympics.

Pellerud stepped down as Canada coach after leading the team to the quarter-finals of the 2008 Olympics.

He guided Canada to ninth in the world in the FIFA rankings and also led it to a fourth-place finish in the 2003 World Cup.

After Canada, Pellerud signed on as director of women's soccer in Trinidad and Tobago, with a particular interest in the under-17 team leading up to Trinidad and Tobago hosting the 2010 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

While he enjoyed the job, things got difficult towards the end after the ousting of Trinidad soccer uber-boss Jack Warner. In a nutshell, they stopped paying Pellerud and other coaches in March as money dried up.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"He's a great tactician. He's got his style of play and it's effective."

Canadian women's soccer coach John Herdman talks about Canada's former bench boss, Even Pellerud.

Lockout. Fehr says NHLPA ready but waiting on league to resume talks

Donald Fehr says the NHL Players' Association is ready to get back to the bargaining table at any moment.

He's just waiting for the NHL to feel the same way.

"(We aren't talking) because the owners have not indicated a desire to resume," the NHLPA's executive director said Wednesday night before a charity game. "We've indicated any number of times that we're willing to resume when they are (and) we're willing to resume without preconditions.

"So we're waiting to hear back from them."

The sides haven't negotiated with one another since Dec. 6 in New York, when talks broke down. They also met with a U.S. federal mediator for two days in New Jersey last week and reported no progress.

From the NHL's perspective, negotiations should only resume once there is something new to say.

"I don't think either party is refusing a meeting," deputy commissioner Bill Daly said in an email. "But unless there is an indication one side or the other is prepared to move or has a new idea to move the process forward — and so far neither side has indicated — I am not sure what we would do at the meeting.

"What is the agenda? Who is directing the conversation?"

Fehr indicated that he liked the idea put forward by Winnipeg Jets defenceman Ron Hainsey that the same parties who met two weeks ago return to the bargaining table, plus himself and commissioner Gary Bettman. Progress was made during a session that included four new owners and a number of players, including Sidney Crosby.

"That seems like it might work if the owners are interested in it," said Fehr.

However, Daly indicated that it didn't hold much appeal.

The deputy commissioner created a stir earlier in the day when he made an appearance on CBC's HNIC Radio and was asked to give a simple yes or no answer on whether there would be an agreement in time to save the season. He responded "yes."

"That's good news," said Fehr. "I'm glad to hear that. I certainly hope he's right. That's the players' goal, that's what we want to try and do.

"Hopefully, we'll get back together and negotiate out the remaining issues as soon as possible."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We don't have anything new to say right now."

NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly on the status of negotiations.

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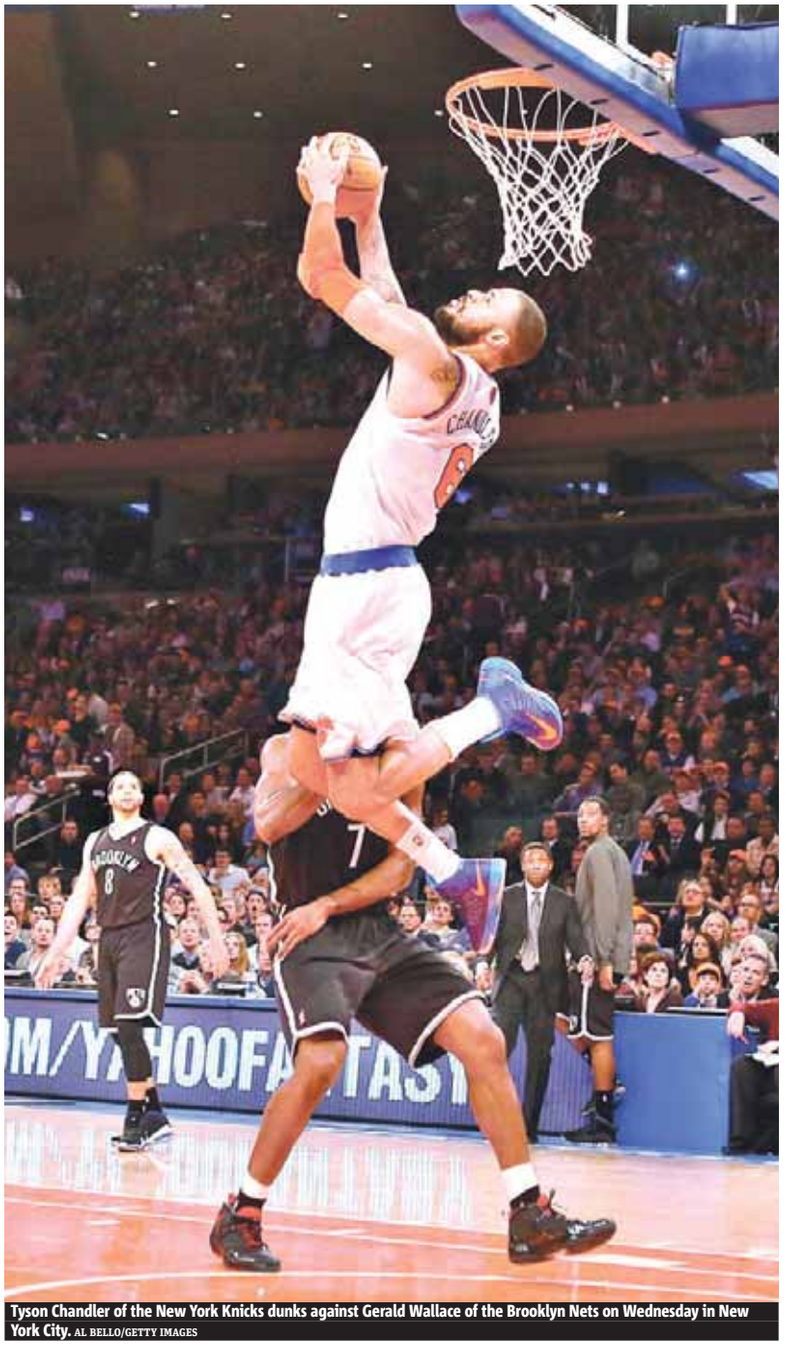


Tyson Chandler of the New York Knicks dunks against Gerald Wallace of the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday in New York City. AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Anthony and Knicks win big in 'statement game' vs. Nets

NBA. Knicks go up 2-1 in head-to-head with New York hosting Brooklyn for first time in fledgling rivalry

Wednesday's game

Knicks	Nets
100	86

Carmelo Anthony and the Knicks know they can't entirely dismiss the rivalry talk, not with the Nets just a few miles away.

On the court and in the standings, the distance keeps growing.

Anthony scored 31 points in his return to the lineup, and New York beat Brooklyn 100-86 on Wednesday night in the third meeting this season between the city rivals.

After two tight games in Brooklyn, the Knicks turned the first one at Madison Square Garden into a rout by dominating the second half. Anthony, who missed two games with a sprained left ankle, moved fine and shot well, though his scoring average against the Nets this season actually dropped to 37 points per game.

"At the end of the day, these are statement games, these are big games, divisional games," Anthony said.

J.R. Smith added 19 points and Tyson Chandler had 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Knicks, who bounced back from their first home loss Monday against Jeremy Lin and Houston, improving to 11-1 at MSG.

Chandler scored 12 on 6-of-8 shooting in the second half.

"I just wanted to close the game. I wanted to make a statement," Chandler said. "Tonight was a big game for us, a game in our division, an opportunity to gain a full game as far as the lead goes, and we have to make statements like that."

Joe Johnson scored 17 points for the Nets, who have lost three straight and eight of 10. What once was a deadlock for the Atlantic Division lead after the first meeting is now a six-game advantage for the Knicks.

"We have a lot of season left. We'll get it turned around," Nets coach Avery Johnson said. "We're going to get back in the lab on Friday and work on some parts of our game and get this bad taste out."

The Nets won 96-89 in overtime on Nov. 26 in the rescheduled season opener that was postponed after Superstorm Sandy, and the Knicks pulled out a 100-97 victory Dec. 11 behind Anthony's 45 points and Jason Kidd's tiebreaking three-pointer with 24 seconds left.

This one was only close for a half with the Knicks outscoring the Nets 48-38 in the final 24 minutes.

"Once they started hitting the way they did, it's kind of deflating," Williams said. "It takes you away from your game. You try to get it all back at once instead of being patient and executing like we did in the first half."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"They're right across the bridge, so these games definitely mean a lot."

The New York Knicks' Carmelo Anthony on facing the Brooklyn Nets.

Tebow talk turns to possible sojourn to try Canadian game

Tim Tebow, left, was passed up for the New York Jets' starting quarterback job for the final two games of the NFL regular season. RICK SCHULTZ/GETTY IMAGES

To Tebow or not to Tebow.

That's the CFL question.

With the New York Jets electing to bypass quarterback Tim Tebow as starter Mark Sanchez's replacement for Sunday's game, there has been plenty of speculation and rumours out of the NFL that he might just leave and try tossing footballs next season in Canada.

Apparently, his negotiation rights are now held by the Montreal Alouettes, who just signed 40-year-old Anthony Calvillo to a new two-year contract.

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats used to have the former first-round NFL draft pick's negotiating rights but dropped him during the season.

Negotiating rights are secret in the CFL so it's only speculative that Montreal has them right now. But sources suggest they do.

Several CFL teams need a quarterback, Winnipeg for one. But even if the Jets release him, chances are some other NFL team will take a shot at him. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NFL

Authorities finish Belcher investigation

Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher apparently was worried he would lose his baby and money to his longtime girlfriend before fatally shooting her and killing himself, according to newly released police reports.

Belcher also complained about Kasandra Perkins, the mother of the couple's three-month-old daughter, in conversations and text messages sent to a woman he was dating on the side, the reports show.

In one text message from late October or early November, Belcher wrote he "would shoot" Perkins "if she didn't leave him alone." The girlfriend told police that Belcher said "his child's mother threatened to take all his money and his child if they split up."

Belcher shot Perkins multiple times in their home on Dec. 1 and then drove to team headquarters, where he killed himself in front of his coach and general manager.

The Jackson County prosecutor's office reviewed the police reports, which first were obtained by the Kansas City Star, before closing the case Friday. It formally ruled the deaths of Belcher, 25, and Perkins, 22, a murder-suicide.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
The Sun joins Mars, your ruler, in the career area of your chart tomorrow, so you will be even more ambitious than usual. Impress those in positions of power but try not to do so at the expense of other people.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You are up for whatever life throws at you and when the Sun changes signs tomorrow, there will no holding you back. However, after your initial burst of enthusiasm you will need to settle into a steady routine.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
It may at times seem as if the answers are "out there" waiting to be discovered but in reality they are "in here", where facts mean less than feelings. Take time to listen to your inner voice today — it has lots to tell you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Don't worry too much if you have not been getting along with a certain person of late because you will soon be friends again. You will also find that your opinions were not nearly as far apart as you had previously believed.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You need to get serious about your work and your health. Because everything has been going so well for you of late, you have tended to overlook certain things but now it's time to take care of those boring details.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Do something creative, something that gets you noticed. Everyone was born with an ability of some kind, so focus on your own special talent and make it work for you on all kinds of levels, including financial.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
The next few days are going to be of added importance for family matters. You will certainly find it easier than usual to see the world through loved ones' eyes. Better understanding makes compromise possible.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
However hard you try, you will not change another person's viewpoint. And however hard they try, they will not change yours. So what can you do? You can steer clear of each other as much as is humanely possible.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Over the next few days, your thoughts will turn to what you own, what you earn and, more importantly, how you can start earning more. Get rid of a dozen ideas but the one that remains will make you rich.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The old solar year is coming to an end and when the Sun moves into your birth sign tomorrow, a new cycle will begin. After the disappointments of recent weeks, it will feel wonderful to know that all things are possible.

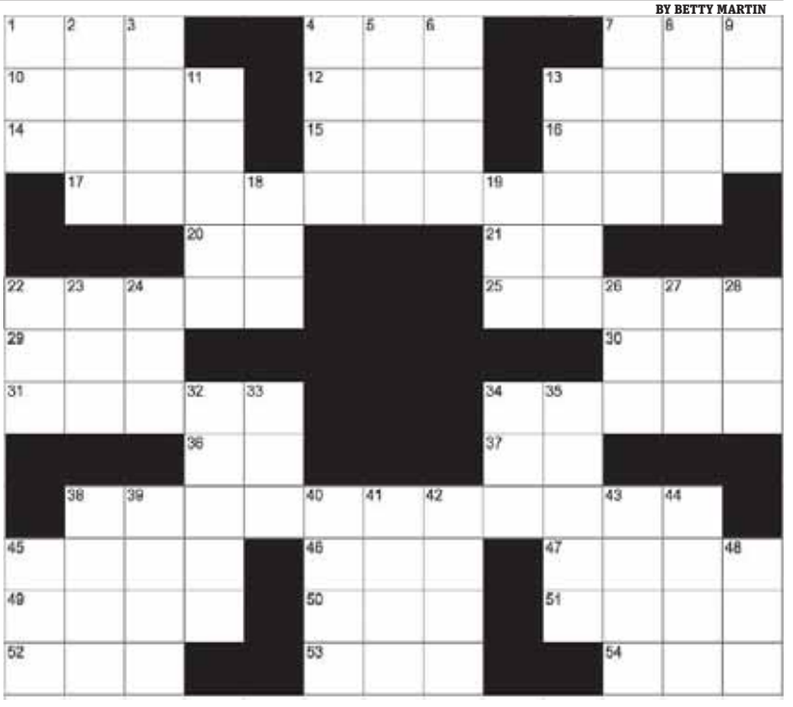
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Get away for a while. Leave the chaos and confusion of everyday life far behind. Before you go, let someone know that you do not exist to cater to their every whim. You have needs too and they must be satisfied.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Recent cosmic activity has made it possible for you to move up in your work or career. Now you must decide if you are happy with what you accomplished or if you want to go higher still. It's your choice.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

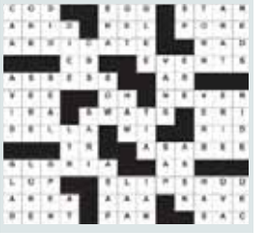
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Vestment
4. Keyboard key
7. Nickname of comedian Bill
10. One not to be trusted
12. Havana greeting
13. — 70's Show
14. Thin Man's dog
15. Soup container
16. Rodents
17. Stargazers
20. Movie alien
21. Egyptian Sun God
22. Touched by an Angel actress
25. Carry in inventory
29. Pester
30. "Norma —"
31. Tempest
34. Beautify
36. Battery sz.
37. Head out
38. Ethel's partner in hijinks
45. Pitch
46. Gobbled up
47. Tiny amount
49. Police activity
50. Cartoon pooch
51. Barbershop sound
52. Hill dweller
53. CPR specialist
54. Opposite of WNW

Down
1. Chicken – King
2. One of The Simpsons
3. Belfry inhabitants
4. Filled tortilla
5. Star of M*A*S*H
6. U2's lead vocalist
7. Cinders
8. Bran source
9. Ave. crossers
11. Hotel fees
13. Halloween indulgence
18. Road abbr.
19. Robinson or Doubtfire
22. Found in the ER
23. Have a bite
24. Self
26. Gold, to Juan
27. My Mother the —
28. Olin of thirtysomething
32. Participated in a marathon
33. Spring mo.
34. Turkish title
35. Roberts of Everybody Loves Raymond
38. Bank transaction
39. Kind of price
40. Steak order
41. Ledger entry
42. Penny
43. Completed
44. Soul singer Redding
45. La-la lead-in
48. Mimic

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

	8		6		2		3	
		3	4		1	8		
9								7
		5		1		2		
3								4
		4		3		7		
5								1
		6	8		3	5		
	4		1		9		8	

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	5	9	3	4	7	1	2	8
3	8	4	2	1	5	9	7	6
1	7	2	9	8	6	3	5	4
5	3	7	1	6	9	8	4	2
9	4	1	5	2	8	6	3	7
8	2	6	4	7	3	5	1	9
7	9	5	6	3	2	4	8	1
2	1	3	8	9	4	7	6	5
4	6	8	7	5	1	2	9	3

Today 6°/2° Rain 80%
Friday 6°/2° Rain 90%
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Check the 14 day trend.
TWN incorporates MSC data

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Color: White

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Models: GTAP2250DWW / GTMX100EDWW
Color: White

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White-Westinghouse

18 Cu. Ft. Frost Free Refrigerator

Model: WRT8G3EW
Dimensions: 29,8" W x 65,5" H x 31.8" D
Color: White

SALE PRICED **$399**

FRIGIDAIRE

18 Cu. Ft. Frost Free Fridge

Model: FFHT1826PS
Dimensions: 30" W x 66,7" H x 30,1" D
Color: Stainless Steel

SALE PRICED **$599**

FRIGIDAIRE

30" Fan Convection Range

Model: CFEF3019MW
Color: White

SALE PRICED **$599**

FRIGIDAIRE GALLERY

30" Convection Oven Range

Model: CGEF3055MF
Color: Stainless Steel

SALE PRICED **$799**

FRIGIDAIRE

20 Cu. Ft. Bottom Mount Fridge

Model: FF2H2012NS
Dimensions: 30" W x 67,75" H x 33,8" D
Color: Stainless Steel

SALE PRICED **$849**

SAMSUNG

22 Cu. Ft. French Door Refrigerator

Model: RF220NCTA
Dimensions: 30" W x 65,4" H

STAINLESS STEEL **$1299**

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4.0 Cu. Ft. Washer and 7.3 Cu. Ft. Electric Dryer

SAMSUNG

Models: WF210/DV210
Color: White

PAIR SALE PRICED **$1199**

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SAMSUNG

Model: SMH1816
Colors: Stainless Steel, Black, or White

STAINLESS STEEL **$249**

Subtract $20 for White or Black

SAMSUNG

Flex Duo Oven Electric Range w/Convection Oven

Model: NE595R1ABSR
Color: Stainless Steel

SALE PRICED **$999**

SAMSUNG

Tall Tub Dishwasher w/ Stainless Steel Interior

Model: DMT610RH

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